

WOMAN IN ISLAM

A Comparative Study

By

SAID ABDULLAH SEIF AL-HATIMY

Dedication

*To my mother who died while I
was still an infant,*

*To the 900,000,000 Muslims,
men and women the world over*

*To every chaste woman in the
world :*

this short journey is dedicated

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Foreword

(Inshallah the next reader of this book will find it as fascinating as I have.)

LOL! You clearly need to research more

When the author approached me with a request to write an introduction note to this Book I gladly accepted because it would afford me an opportunity to register my admiration towards his depth of English and Arabic knowledge and Islamics. Sheikh Said Al-Hatmi is a worthy son of a worthy father, our great teacher, truly respected for his piety and high moral standard and from whose efficient teaching and precepts we had learnt a great deal. instead of basing your new from one

Sheikh Said had spent precious years of serious research and had studied several authentic work in respect of women. Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, not only emancipated women from slavery to which they had been subjected from time immemorial but also raised them to the honourable social level, the Religion of Islam had assigned for them. In his effort Sheikh Said has produced this valuable Book interestingly written.

This Book is designed to refresh our knowledge in order to be able to value more the teachings of Islam which had granted womanfolk full human rights and privileges which the modern westernized women are yet to enjoy, despite their persistent struggle.

During the life time of Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and also during the subsequent centuries under the Caliphatehood of the Illustrious Companions and their successors, womanfolk enjoyed supreme social status and happy marital relations. This was because the whole social set up and mode of life was founded on the Qur'anic principles. The Muslim population had been fully conscious of their obligations and had applied themselves honestly towards their fulfilment, with resultant peace and serenity.

It is a well-known fact that religious wars had taken a heavy toll of the male population which resulted in the female population to preponderate. Nevertheless, this great imbalance never gave rise to such sexual ills as prostitution and lesbianism which have now developed into such an enormous practical problem that really baffles western countries. Each country is seriously engaged towards finding a solution which is not very far to seek.

Be it accepted or rejected, the solution lies in adhering to the principles of the Holy Qur'an which, among other things, advises the adoption of more than one wife. This will not only drastically reduce professional prostitution but will also provide unique opportunity to the erstwhile unmarried women to lead happy matrimonial lives and to have the delight of raising their own legitimate children. In addition, there will be no unwanted children who now form the bulk of social misfits, responsible for heinous crimes, despicable iniquities as well as

other sufferings. Their maniacal propensities are also reflected in incidence of rapism, which is ever increasing, for lack of suitable deterrant penalties that the Holy Qur'an has prescribed.

These problems constitute a challenge to the present system of education which is divorced from sound religious foundation. The westernised world would be well advised to follow the Teachings of Islam which will no doubt cure the existing sexual ills into which it has stumbled. The History of Islamic Empire had proved this during its glorious past.

I sincerely wish this book will serve the purpose to which it has been designed.

S. S. AL-FARISY

Introduction

The problem of woman is getting priority now in different spheres and various cultures.

I have tried in this journey to draw a sketchy idea of how the diversities of those cultures tried to solve the problem of woman and how she was treated laying much emphasis on what Islam has contributed.

Like Christianity and being second to it, Islam has adherents world over of 900,000,000, whereas the former has somewhat quarter million more adherents.

We hear today about the Woman Lib ; Women International Conferences in Kenya, Mexico or Morocco and of the Women International Day etc. etc. All these are very encouraging attempts. They are trying to give her, her true role in the society.

For this and for many other reasons I find myself duty bound to remind fellow Muslims of the treasures in our culture and to whisper to the world to make serious studies of the Islamic culture. I am sure and certain that they will find many a solution for most of the International problems.

A study of any particular people and their culture should be impartial, Islam is no exception to

the rule. (There should be no personal grudges or personal interest.) Moreover there should be no preconception prejudication that Islam was or is this or that.

They will appreciate what Islam contributed in the case of woman who was completely ignored by all the world cultures, by some as late as the 19th century. Her main task was to attract men and please them. It is interesting to note that, for the first time in history, a woman Priest is allowed to preach on 2-4-1978, while in Islam she used to correct a Caliph. She has, by the grace of Allah and under the banner of Islam turned to be the vanguard of the cause of justice and the co-protector of Islam. This became to be so because of her true understanding of Islam, by her manners, education, upbringing and of her participation in building up a real Muslim society.

Such a woman must never be ignored.

People must take pains in studying her.

Islam was the first to emancipate woman and make her par as man. It gave her, her full rights in every walk of life as we shall see.

About the Christian Era 620 ; when people were still doubtful whether woman had a soul or not whether she was human or otherwise ; we find two woman delegates among the 75 Yathribites (Medinites) who came to the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asking him to migrate to Yathrib (Medina) where there were better

scope for the call of Islam (Da'wa). The two women were : Nusaiba bint Ka'ab (Umme' Ammāra) of Banu Najjaar and Asma'a bint' Amr (Umme Mani') of Bani Salma.

I was first hesitant whether to write this travel in Arabic, English or in some other language. I soon found myself writing it in English, so as to be read by more people. After the 17th century Muslims did not take much interest in learning Arabic because of the European influence. French was the language of art etc. Then English was the international language. Today Muslims have waken up and are once again trying to learn Arabic. There is a long way before them.

My thanks are due to Mr. Adly and al-Ukht Asiya who went through the manuscript and offered me many a suggestion, and to Mrs. Thelma Udyavar who typed the manuscript. And to all who helped whether by a word or encouragement.

The last, but not the least, my thanks are due to Mr. Abdul Waheed Khan General Manager, Islamic Publications Ltd. Lahore, Pakistan who did everything that this travel required to see light.

Said Abdulla Seif Al-Hatimy

Al-Ghobra

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1

Status of Women Before Islam

We shall try to discuss in a brief and authenticated manner the status of women in Islam, a subject of which is the least objectively presented to the world today.

Let us first peep through the window pane of civilisation, and see how women were treated and what rights they had, so that we may have a better perspective of how Islam dealt with this problem.

Turning to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, we come across the following :

In India

In India subjection was a cardinal principle 'Day and night women must be kept by their protectors in a state of dependence', says Manu. The rule of inheritance was agnatic, that descent traced through males only to the exclusion of females. She was regarded as the source of sin and moral and spiritual depravity.

An Indian wife used to call her husband: "My Lord" or even "My God", as he was regarded as her earthly god. She never ate with him. She had to follow a few yards behind him when both walked together. She was to worship her husband. She had to serve her father, be a chattel of the husband and submit to her children.

An Indian woman became a plaything for animal passion. Indians looked upon sex relations between man and woman as loathsome and evil; whether they contract legally or illegally.¹

In India they used to regard a good wife as a woman whose mind, speech and body are kept in subjection, and so acquires high renown both in this world; and in the next, the same abode with her husband. So much so about India.

In Ancient Greece

Let us now see how the ancient Greek civilization treated its women.

The woman was forced to marry without her consent, as her consent was not regarded as a necessity. The parents made her submit to their wishes. She was supposed to accept a husband and lord, chosen by her parents, even though he were a complete stranger to her. She had to obey.

The Greek women were always looked down upon as minors, and were to obey blindly their male

1. Abul 'Ala Maududi : *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam* (with adaptations).

kinsmen : that is to say, father, brother or to some extent their uncles.

During the prime of Greek civilization a chaste woman was a precious thing. Greek women observed some sort of *Purdah*. They had the *Harimlek* (women's apartment).

Later on the house of a prostitute became the focus of attention of all classes of the Greek society, and all national decisions were taken under her influence. Her house became the place of worship as she represented Aphrodite : the goddess of love and beauty who betrayed her husband god and made love with three other gods.¹

Women in Greece were of three types: (1) The prostitutes who were for men's satisfaction only. (2) The mistresses, and their main task was to look after the body and health of their lords, massaging etc. (3) The third group was the wives whose duty was to bear and bring up children and look after them in the same way as nannies nowadays do. Their status never rose higher than that.

In Rome

Coming to their next door neighbours; the Romans; we find that they used to regard a wife as a babe, a minor, or a ward; therefore she must be looked after. She must be continuously under the protection and guardianship of her husband.

1. Abul 'Ala Maududi : *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam* (with adaptations).

During those days if a woman married, she and her property passed into the power of her husband. Not only that, but he also exercised every right over her. When she did anything wrong it was he who had full right of passing judgement on her. He had the right of even sentencing her to death.

A Roman wife was something like a purchased property of her husband's. Thus she was like a slave acquired solely for her lord's benefit. She was not allowed to take part in any civil or public affairs: that is to say; she could not be a trustee, a witness or stand surety for another or even be a tutor. She was just like a piece of furniture to decorate a man's abode.

When her husband died her sons or in laws; especially brothers-in-law; had the legal right over her.

Slavonic Tribes

If we read the history of Slavonic Tribes and go very deep we come across something very interesting about the status of their women. It suffices to read extracts of a book being published by its author Ossolineum when translated to English it becomes "The Upturned Anchor". The extracts were published in the Fakty 76 of September 76 under the title "Jok Oni Kochali" (How they loved).

The extracts read:

"At the beginning of the 12th Century, Kosmos, the author of the *Chronicle of the Czechs* wrote that a hundred years earlier it was possible for Pommorian

man to marry more than two wives, and it was not a violation of the law for a man to *take* another man's wife.

Nearly at the same period we come across the Polish king Bolestaw Smialy (the brave) punishing the unfaithful wives whose husbands used to spend long years away from home, because those wives were not faithful to their husbands. They had committed adultery during the absence of their husbands.

A German chronicler Thietmar tells us that Slavonic wives were killed after their husbands' funeral in order to share their fate. This type of killing a wife after the death of her husband reminds us to the SATI in India where they used to burn the wife alive together with her dead husband.

Bolestaw Chroby enacted that whoever dared to seduce another man's wife he was to be taken to the market bridge and fixed to it with a nail.

It is also said that Slavonic girls used to have extramarital relations before they got married. It sometimes happened that a husband expelled his newly wed wife just because he found her a virgin. To preserve a woman with her honour (virginity) was regarded as a sign of the low value of the girl as nobody had wanted her before. The consequences and reactions of such a treatment of expelling a newly wed wife who was found virgin was that she used to be a prostitute; and when she gave birth to

a baby girl ; she generally buried her alive.¹

The Slavonic women were not the only ones who used to kill their daughters. We see that Prussian women killing their fatherless daughters or better still the illegitimate girls.

The state of killing young girls alive made it easier for the bishop Christian to buy the girls, educate them, and using them to give chorus to Christian missionaries who used to go from place to place propagating Catholicism.

Kosmos tells us also that a Czech prince, Brzetyslaw by name, used to sentence to banishment unmarried women and widows who got pregnant. He gave the following reason for his act : "None forbids them to contract legal marriage. So why on earth ! do they do this thing illegally, and then they procure *abortion* which is worst sin of all crimes?"

(It seems that abortion is not a new thing and it appears to be one of the worst things and that is why men of a religion in America are trying to stop it).

In Scandinavia

Scandinavian women were under perpetual tutelage, regardless of their being married or otherwise. This state of affairs went on for a long period. No woman was to marry without first getting the

1. Something similar was in vogue in Pre-Islamic Arabia. The only difference was that in Arabia it was the father who used to bury the daughter alive.

consent of her tutor, otherwise he could use his powers and make use for her property during her lifetime if he wished so.

In China

The position and status of a woman in China was far worse than in any other part of the world.

Let us quote one example :

One of the Chinese ladies said, "We women are given the lowest position in the human society. We must perform most of the tasks as our share in the society."

It is also said : What a pity ! The woman is the most unlucky being. There is nothing in the world less inferior than a woman.

Boys would stand in front of the doors as if they were gods fallen from high heavens. No father was happy when he was told that his wife gave birth to a baby girl.

When a girl matured, then she hid herself in her room so that she might not look at anybody's face. And when she died nobody wept about her.

We read the following in Vol. 4 of *Encyclopedia Britannica* : page 409,

"Unmarried women were members of their natal families, but on marriage a woman moved to the family of her husband and was afterwards subject to the authority of her husband's parents and seniors. Any property brought by the bride, apart from such items as personal

ornaments, was transferred to the ownership of her husband's family. The position of a bride who became a daughter-in-law, was largely weak, and she could rely on the physical protection of her natal family, only if she could risk disfavour. In practice, however, the wife's position strengthened with time more particularly after the birth of sons and performance of mourning for her husband's seniors."

"Marriage was arranged by formal agreement between the heads of the family concerned, after negotiation usually conducted through a go-between according to the generally accepted forms."

A husband could divorce his wife on specific grounds such as adultery; provided that her parents were willing to have her back, otherwise she will go to the streets.

A wife who was left by her husband might report to court asking the magistrate to look into her case.

In Judaism

Some of the Jewish faith regarded a woman as a much more inferior creature than her counterpart the man.

Others considered her to be even lower in grade than that of the servants.

She never inherited anything from her parents, if she had a brother or brothers.

Her father had every right of selling her if she were under the maturity age.

When a woman got married all her possessions were transferred to her husband. He used to exercise full right over her possessions during their joint life.

If a Jewish wife caught her husband in bed with another woman; she was to keep silent and not complain. This was so because he had every right over her. He could do anything he liked.

A wife complained that her husband made love with her in an immoral and unnatural way. The reply was "We cannot do anything because you are his property."

In Public Prayers there should be at least ten men. If it happened that there were nine men and a lot of women, no prayers were conducted because women were looked upon as nothing and were not counted.

It was not encouraged to commit adultery with a Jewish woman, and was permissible with a non-Jewish.

The heaviest burden for maintaining the daily requirements of the Mosaic dietary laws falls on the woman, as she is much inferior to man. She is to see that meat and other daily foods are not mixed with forbidden things. She is not to touch pickles, wine or heat soup if she hasn't been ritually cleansed.¹

1. *Encyclopedia Britannica* Vol. 5, page 732 with adaptations.

In Christianity

The author of the book, *The Status of Women in Islam*, gives an elaborate quotation from: *Marriage East and West*, by David and Vera Mace:

"Let no one suppose, either, that our Christian heritage is free of such slighting judgement. It would be hard to find anywhere a collection of more degrading reference to the female sex than the early Christian Fathers provide: Lecky the famous historian, speaks of (these fierce incentives which form so conspicuous and so grotesque a portion of the writings of the Fathers—Woman was represented at the door of the hell, as the mother of all human ills. She should live in continual penance on account of the curses she had brought upon the world. She should be ashamed of her dress,¹ for it is memorial of her fall. She should be especially ashamed of her beauty, for it is the most potent instrument of the devil). One of the most scathing of these attacks on women is that of Tetrulian: (Do you know that you are each an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway; you are the unsealer of that (for-

1. Talmud tells us: ".....the dress of the dancers arouse the sexual desire, and their beauty makes us praise them. These two things are completely forbidden if the women dancers are not Jews" or something like that.

bidden) tree; you are first deserters of the divine law; you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack, you destroyed so easily God's image! man. On account of your desert—that is death—even the Son of God had to die). Not only did the Church affirm the inferior status of woman, it deprived her of legal rights she had previously enjoyed."¹

We read the following from the Bible:

"Now the snake was the most cunning animal that the Lord God had made. The snake asked the woman, 'Did God really tell you not to eat the fruit from any tree in the garden?' 'We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden' the woman answered, 'except the tree in the middle of it.....if we do, we will die.' The snake replied, 'That's not true, you will not die.....when you eat it you will be like God and know what is good and what is bad.'.....So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband and he also ate it God asked, 'Did you eat the fruit that I told you not to eat?' The man answered, 'The woman you put here with me gave me the fruit and I ate it'.....And He said to the woman, 'I will increase your trouble in pregnancy and your pain in giving birth. In spite of this, you will still have desire for your husband, yet you will be subject to him'."

(Genesis, 3 : 1 to 7 + 12 + 16)

1. Riad Droubi : *Status of Women in Islam*.

In Biblical Law

Encyclopedia Biblica provides an interesting reading about some of the Biblical Laws, or better still-Mosaic Law.

“A woman was betrothed.”¹

For a man to betroth a wife meant simply to acquire possession of her by payment of the purchase money which was a kind of dowry given to her father. It was not necessary to get the consent of the girl. And the marriage was valid.

The woman being a man's property, he had every right over her. He had even the right of divorce, and it was the privilege of the husband only. The wife had no such rights, as it was regarded as a matter of course.

This state of affairs was in vogue in Europe in varying degrees as late as the nineteenth century or after the French revolution.

Movement for the Emancipation of Women

In the 19th Century women could not tolerate such state of affairs any longer. They formed movements in Europe and America to emancipate women.

This movement made efforts to make woman take part in the educational institutions. The engineers of the movement were Sophia Bryan, Frances Mary Buss and Dorothea Beale in Europe

1. Riad Droubi : *Status of Woman in Islam*.

and Lucy Stone in America. They were fighting for the human rights of women.

The place for a woman was in the home, her task was to produce children and to take care of them. She was to depend completely on her husband. She did not have an identity of her own as she was subordinate to man. There were many other things that made the movement for the emancipation of women gain momentum, especially when quotations from St. Paul were cited to show that it was not meant by God for women to be equal to men. Adam was created first, and from him Eve. These quotations were cited to attack the feminist movement.¹

If you ever read European literature during the Cavalier period you feel as if they make you understand that it was the golden age of women in Europe. But going very deep and reading the gaps between words you come to the conclusion that it was the epoch of chivalry. I would advise the reader to read Cervante's *Don Quixote* and he will see how women were treated. During that period people were thinking of horses more than of women.

Manu and Christianity on Women

The result of a Christian religious conference held in the Fifth Century was that woman had no soul and her abode was hell. The only exception to this was Mary, the mother of Jesus.

1. *Everyman's Encyclopedia* with adaptations.

A century later another conference was held to discuss whether woman was human or not. They came out with the result that the woman was a human. She was created for the benefit of man so she had to serve him.

In India a woman was kept in subjection by her protector, and she had to call her husband. "My Lord" or "My God."

If you think carefully you come to the conclusion that what Christianity tried to do and talk on matters pertaining to women was a repetition of what Manu had said previously.

In Arabia

Coming to Arabia, or better still, to Mecca, the cradle of Islam we meet with the pre-Islam Arabs burying their daughters alive.

A Jahiliyya (Pre-Islamic) Arab considered a woman as an inferior creature. When a man was told that his wife had given birth to a baby girl, he was really grieved. His face darkened. What was he to do then? He ran away from people because of the shame of giving birth to a baby girl.

The Jahiliyya Arabs accepted the girl in two different ways. Many of them buried the girls alive and with them, they thought, they buried all the shame that might encounter them, had they brought up those girls. Other used to act quite differently, they brought up the girls on sufferance and contempt.

A Jahiliyya Arab wife was inherited just like chattel. Al-Bukhari narrates that when a man died his son had every right upon his wife. One of them might marry her for himself, if he wished to; or they might marry her to anyone they desired. They might even stop her from getting married. If she wanted to get married, then she had to pay them money as her ransom.

He thought I was
short & fat!?

In Islam

The Contribution of Islam

It will now be much easier for us to appreciate what Islam has contributed to the well being of woman and how it liberated them from all those yokes.

Islam has regarded the practice of burying a girl alive as a crime *i.e.*, murder. In this respect the Holy Quran says :

“And when the female infant buried alive is questioned: “for what crime she was killed?” (Quran, 81 : 8, 9) (Even her father himself could not give her an answer).

Quran also criticizes parents on how they react when news is brought to them about the birth of a girl. On this the Holy Quran says :

“When news is brought to one of them, of the birth of a female child, his face darkens and he is filled with inward grief. With shame does he hide himself from his people because of the bad news he has received. Shall he retain her

on sufferance and contempt, or bury her in the dust? Ah! what evil choice they decide on.”

(Quran, 16 : 58, 59)

Reasons for Why Girls were Killed

We shall appreciate the way man used to deal with different situations and the way he regarded a woman in such an olden society (whether that society be in Arabia), fittest and strongest. This was more so as man attacked man and man looted man. This was their common law.

Bahiy al-Khuury in his book : *al Mar'a bainal 'Bayti wal Mujtama-i* (Women between Home and Society) throws light on problem in a very good way :

“.....Was a man, then, to blame, when he, in those days, arranged his life and other social activities in accordance with the conditions prevailing then, taking into account the invasions that could happen at any moment and the unexpected looting and..... “Was he to blame, then, when he went out looting or defending, if he exempted the pregnant, the one who nursed her baby and the like who were weak amongst women ?

“To which of the two births would he be happy; about the birth of a baby boy who would ride a horse, take up arms and fight the enemy or of that of a baby girl that would not be able to do anything of the sort. Over and above, she

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“To which of the two births would he be happy; about the birth of a baby boy who would ride a horse, take up arms and fight the enemy or of that of a baby girl that would not be able to do anything of the sort. Over and above, she

would be a burden in the battle and.....she would have to be protected?

".....The Arabs did not welcome the birth of a baby girl, and this was so because of the nature of their society. Wars and invasions never ceased and taking revenge never stopped. All these things depended on the male, but a woman was unable to do any of these tasks, in addition to it, she was the desired loot for (the) service (of the enemy) in the eyes of the enemy, or she was for his entertainment....."

We learn from Hadith (Sayings of the Holy Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that a girl should not suffer injustice or inequality. He is quoted as saying what it meant :

"He who has a daughter and does not bury her alive, or insult her, and does not prefer his son to her, Allah will enter him into Paradise."

(There are many other sayings that encourage the bringing up of girls in the same way as with equal treatment as the boys.)

Adam and Eve Blamed

According to the teachings of Islam woman is not blamed for Adam's first mistake. In some verses of the Holy Quran Adam is specifically blamed :

"Then they twain ate thereof, so that their shame became apparent unto them, and they began to hide by keeping on themselves some of

the leaves of the Garden. and adam Dis-Obeyed his Lord, so Went astray. (Quran, 20 : 121)

(Let us see what Abdullah al-Khayyat in his book, *The Muslim's Guide to Faith* has to say here. He quotes the Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying : "every child is born with an upright nature, but his father makes him a Christian or a Magian."

This means that every new born child carries within himself an innocent upright nature.....This is in complete contradiction with the Christian creed of the inborn sin. According to Islam no sin is inherited by a child.....Even Adam is not considered sinful in Islam. He forgot Allah's orders and had no intention to disobey his Lord's orders as said in the Quran).

Adam and Eve jointly disobeyed. Both repented and both of them were forgiven.

Women's Human Rights in Islam

Islam dealt with human rights of women at a time when in some parts of the world conferences were being held to discuss whether she had a soul or not and whether she was human or not, or whether she was to worship God as the man does or otherwise, or whether she will enter Paradise or not etc. etc.

These conferences took place between the fifth and seventh centuries of the Christian era. It was

at this very time that Islam came into being and gave the answer in such an amazing bravery :

“O Mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread (abroad) a multitude of men and women.....” (Quran, 4 : 1)

“He, it is Who did create you from a single soul and therefrom did create his mate that he might dwell with her in life.....”

(Quran, 7 : 199)

“And Allah hath given you wives of your own kind, and hath given you from your wives, sons and grandsons, and hath made provision of good things for you. Is it then in vanity that they believe and in the grace of Allah that they disbelieve?” (Quran, 16 : 72)

“The Creator of heavens and earth : He has made for you pairs from among your selves.”

(Quran, 42 : 11)

“And of His signs is this : He created for you helpmates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are portents for folks who reflect.....” (Quran, 30 : 18)

“O Mankind ! Lo ! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes, that ye may know each other . . .”
(Quran 49 : 13)

Religious Obligations

Islam does not differentiate women from man in terms of religious obligations. It is interesting to find out that a woman has certain advantages (you may call them so if you like) over man in certain cases.

Let us quote some such cases :

She is exempted of the daily prayers and of fasting during her menstruation period (monthly course) and for forty days of her confinement after giving birth to a child. She does not have to make up for the missed prayers because of one of the aforementioned reasons. She may not fast during her pregnancy but she is not exempted from prayers and when she is nursing her baby if there is any threat to her health or her baby's she is allowed to miss fasts. She can make up for such missed fasting days whenever she can before the next Ramadan—the ninth month of Islamic Era and the month in which fasting from food etc., is observed from dawn to sunset for the whole month).

Islam took into account the physical and psychological changes in the natural female function, e.g., a woman might be nursing her babe or looking after him ; that it made the attendance of congregational prayers optional for her while it is compulsory for men. A man must attend all the congregational prayers, especially if he happens to live near a mosque or a place where Muslims meet to say prayers. It is not accepted that he says his prayers

alone at home. While it is permissible for a woman to do so. Some of the theologians even say it is preferable that she say her prayers at home.

Marriage in Islam

Coming to marriage we find it to be that everlasting conduct which engulfs everything and by which all things become good and bear the required fruit for its kind.

The Holy Quran has the following to say :

“And all things We have created by *pairs*, that happily ye may reflect” (Quran, 51 : 49).

“Glory to Him Who created all the *sexual pairs of that which they knew not*” (Quran 36 : 36)

Marriage is the natural tie between the pair (male and female) as the above quoted verse of the Holy Quran says : all things are created in *Pairs*. It is more so true in everything in our dynamic world. You find this even in things like electricity : we have the positive and negative. Neither of the two will function satisfactorily alone without the help of the other.

Lingering on one of the afore quoted verse :

“And of His signs is this : He created help-mates for you from yourselves that you may find in them *quiet of mind*, and He ordained in in you love and mercy.....” (Quran, 30 : 21)

We come to know that marriage is not for the sexual urge only as it could appear at the first instance to teenagers and their like. We cannot

deny this. Sexual desire exists, but it is just a small portion out of the secret that mere words fail to express the true feelings between the pair. It is more so true with the elderly people than with the younger ones. That top secret could be what was meant by the Holy Quran as rest and peace of mind, and love and mercy, mutual understanding, building up the home, as well as society in general. To quote, but a very simple example. When one of the pair is away from the other for one reason or another they both feel that there is something very important missing in their life.

The result of such a holy tie is not to bring up children and the satisfaction of sexual desire only, but consolation, quiet of mind, rest of the soul, love, mercy, mutual understanding, taking ones share in building up the society and the world at large and their advancement etc., etc.

No Monasticism in Islam

Islam encourages marriage. There is no monasticism in Islam. The following verse depicts this in a clear cut way :

“Then We caused our messenger to follow in their footsteps, and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow, and gave him the Gospel, and placed compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. But *monasticism they invented*—We ordained it *not* for them, only seeking Allah’s pleasure, and they observed it not with right observance.....” (Quran, 57 : 27)

The Messenger of Allah deplored the idea of monasticism forthwith saying : No Monasticism in Islam.

The Prophet (may blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) told a group of men who tried to do the following ; One of them was saying prayers all night long without sleeping, the other used to fast all the time without eating and the third refrained from women, he never married. The Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told them what it meant : "I heard what you said.....I am much more pious than you are, but I fast and eat. I say prayers and sleep, and I marry. This is my Sunna (teaching). Anyone who does not follow it is not one of my followers (does not obey me).

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbids his followers from marrying women solely for their social status or their wealth. There should be a stronger drive than rank and money. He is quoted to have said :

"Do not marry women for the sake of their wealth, because wealth might make them haughty and proud."

He who marries a woman just because of her social status or her rank in society, Allah will not add anything more than deterioration and humiliation before the eyes of others. He urges the marriage of righteous women. He is quoted as saying :

"If you find a pious woman, (bless your stars) you are lucky."

No Marriage without the Girl's Consent

It is reported that a girl came to the Apostle of Allah complaining that her father forced her to marry a man without her consent. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave her the choice between accepting the marriage or invalidating it. The girl responded : "I accepted this marriage, but I wanted to let women know that parents (fathers) have no right to force husbands on them." They must be given the choice of either accepting the marriage or *vice versa*.

Khaddam, Khansa's father forced her to marry a husband. She did not like the idea. Then she went to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah give him peace) who on his turn respected the girl's wish to marry a man of her approval, naturally the first marriage was made invalid.

It is also reported that the Prophet Muhammad (may blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said :

"A widow (or a divorced one) is not to be married before her consent is sought."

"No virgin girl is to marry without first consulting her, and her approval is her keeping silent."

A Muslim woman cannot be forced to marry without her approval. If she is forced to do so, then that marriage is invalidated.

Male's Advantage over Female (A)

Both husband and wife have equal rights and claims on one another, except for one thing or one

* responsibility (i.e., leadership). Islam regards leadership as a natural course in any collective life and it is more consistent with the nature of man.¹

Islam emphasized leadership in all human life. When more than one person say prayers; they are supposed to select a leader for prayers, who is called Imam.

Aqqaad says in his book, *al-Mar'a fil Qur'an* (Woman in the Holy Quran): ".....We find in the nature of the sex physiological composition that one sex desires while the other accepts. This is found in all animal species that have needs and have sexual relations from time to time.

"When there is a sexual urge from both the male and female; it is not the female that commences the wish and call, nor does she fight the rival of the same sex. This is not because of shyness or shame or because of religious obligations or morale. We find this habit even in male and female animals which know nothing of shame or morale. A female animal does not ask a male one to have relations. She just draws his attention by passing in front of him, so as he might follow her, and get her at her own free will. A female animal generally waits the result of a quarrel between male rivals to win her."²

1. In our daily life we have leaders under different titles: Sultans, Kings, Presidents, Ministers, Directors, Managers, Comptrollers, Supervisors, Foremen, Majors, Scout Masters, Bishops, etc. etc.
2. Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqaad: *al-Mar'a fil Qur'an* with adaptations.

Quran has the following rule about the family leadership:

".....And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree of advantage over them. And Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise." (Quran, 2: 228) (*Abdullah*).

One might ask, "Is the husband, then, much superior than his wife, as he is given such an advantage before the law?"

Our answer is this, "Nothing of the sort. A man has been given a degree of advantage in maintenance and protection because of the natural differences between the two sexes. The sex that we all agree to be the fair and weaker sex shows by its name that it needs some sort of protection, especially in very tense situations. There should be no dictatorship on the part of the husband over the wife. There should be counsel, understanding and mutual satisfaction in all matters pertaining to family decisions. If mutual understanding does not prevail in a Muslim family, then it is the innocent children who become poor victims of such a disintegrated family, and all the consequences of it fall on the society. Hence we have delinquents.

Let us quote one example from the Holy Quran on the weaning of a child which will serve as a green light. This is more so after a divorce has taken place:

"Mothers shall suckle¹ their children for two whole years ; (that is) for those who wish to complete the suckling. The duty of feeding and clothing nursing mothers in a seemly manner is upon the father of the child. No one should be charged beyond his capacity. A mother should not be made to suffer because of her child, nor should he on whom the child is born be made to suffer because of his child. And on the father's heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). *If they desire to WEAN the child by mutual CONSENT and after CONSULTATION, it is no sin for them ;* and if ye wish to give your children out to nurse, it is no sin for you, provided that ye pay what is due for you in kindness, observe your duty to Allah, and know that Allah is seer of what you do."

(Qur'an, 2 : 233)

While discussing the status of women in Islam ; at the coffee lounge after supper ; with some of the fellow teachers from different parts of the world, who attended a Refresher Course on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language years ago ; I remember someone to have put the following before us :

"You must be kidding Eh ! You pretend to treat women equally as you do with men ; and just now you quoted a verse from your Book in

1. Now in Europe doctors advise mothers to suckle their infants for at least the first six months of their lives.

which it was mentioned that a woman's share in inheritance is one half of the man's share, and you still want us to believe in your word. Forget it."

This followed an uproar of :

"You can say that again," "He is just fooling himself," "I can't agree with you more" etc. etc.

I said, "I beseech you to be patient."

After that our discussion was very hot and it took us nearly one hour when I asked them leave to go for Maghrib prayers.

The gist of our discussion from my side was :

"It is generally agreed that a man spends one-third of his income on a woman ; she were a wife, mother, daughter or sister or on any other woman. That (a) and (b) man (husband) is fully responsible for the full maintenance of wife and children. This responsibility is not reduced because the wife is either rich or has an access of any personal income.

On the other hand female is not overburdened with any claims or her possessions, so she is far more financially secure and well off. All her possessions before and after marriage remain hers and are not transferred to her husband. Islam does not ask her to spend a penny out of her income on marriage on her family while she is married. It is upon the husband ; whether poor or rich ; to maintain her. Islam does not forbid her from her sharing in family

maintenance on her own freewill, especially if her means of income are much better than her husband's.

On and above this Islam requires from a husband to treat his wife kindly and keep a good company of her. Quran puts this in a clear cut way :

"O ye who believe ! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, nor should you treat them with harshness, that ye may take away part of the dowry ye have given them..... On the contrary, live with them on a footing of kindness and equity if ye take a dislike to them it may be that ye dislike a thing Allah brings about through it a great deal of good."

"But if you decide to take one wife in place of another, even if ye had given the latter a whole treasure for dowry, take not the least bit of it back, would you take it by slander and a manifest wrong ?"

"And how could you take it (dowry) when ye have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a solemn covenant ?"

(Qur'an, 4 : 19-21)

We learn from the above quoted verses that it is advisable for a man who divorces his wife not to ask for what he had given her as a dowry. What a lovely touch to some hard hearted men.

In this respect the Messenger of Allah (Allah's peace be upon him) is quoted as saying what it meant :

"The best of you is the one who is the best for his family. I am the best for my family."

"The perfect believers are those who are the best in their dealings, and the best of you are those who are the best for their wives."

It is also quoted that he said that wives of a lot of people come to his wives complaining against their husbands beating them. He said, ".....those husbands are not the best of you."

It is permissible to flog a wife, as we shall see, but under certain circumstances. Beating a wife should be the last resort.

Divorce

Christianity waged war against Islam as to the problem of divorce. It used to criticize Islam as breaking the heavenly tie between husband and wife. Finally we see Christians accept the natural call and agree or rather recognize divorce as a social solution to many a family problem.

Western Europe is divided into three different ways of accepting divorce :

- (1) Nations agree with the idea of divorce but without bodily separation ; some such nations are : Sweden, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, Germany and Russia.
- (2) Nations that accept bodily separation but not divorce. These countries are Spain and Italy.

- (3) Nations that accept both : divorce and bodily separation. They are France, Belgium, Great Britain, United States of America and some of Socialist States.

The reader might ask : What do you mean by separation ?

It is like this : The husband and wife are separated for ever ; while the female is still regarded by the society as his wife.

Each of the two has full right of doing whatever he/she pleases without any interference from the other.

Islam does not only give the woman the right to decide on marriage, but also the right of divorce. In order to protect the family from rush divorce decisions under temporary emotional stress, especially if the partners are still young ; certain steps and waiting periods must be observed. We shall discuss some such steps forthwith.

If the marriage contract states that the woman can divorce her husband without resorting to court and file a case she may do so ; otherwise she is asked to bring a good reason in asking why she has to divorce before the judge.

This is more so because a woman generally discharges two types of hormones monthly. These hormones affect her behaviour very much and they may even have an effect on her decisions.

Islam took into consideration the relatively more emotional nature of the woman. On this the

Holy Qur'an says :

".....When you have divorced women, and they have reached their prescribed term, retain them in kindness or release them in kindness, and retain them not for injury so that ye transgress limits." (Qur'an 2 : 231)

It is reported that the Apostle of Allah (may blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said something which meant :

"What do those people who play with the limits of Allah think ? You hear them say : "I have divorced my wife, or I have remarried her ? Do they abuse the Book and I am still with you ?"

He said this to people who misused the right of divorce.

Marriage is a sacred tie between the two sexes. It should never be misused. If there is an unsuccessful marriage, then they part from each other in accordance with the Sharia (Islamic Law) and not otherwise.

It was customary in Pre-Islamic Arabia that a husband would foreswear his wife and decide not to live as husband and wife. He may leave her in such a state of suspense for indefinite period. Sometimes after much consultation he may decide to divorce her. This attitude was still in vogue in the early Islamic period. It was soon suppressed by Islam and reconciliation was recommended, but if both are still determined, then divorce is the only fair

solution. The Holy Qur'an reminds those who divorce :

"And if they decide upon divorce (let them remember that) Allah is Hearer, Knower."

(2 : 227)

He hears the cry of all who suffer and knows the reasons.

Steps of divorce are clearly presented in Qur'an. (See somewhere between verses 224 to 237 of Surah al-Baqara. The Holy Qur'an says :

"Women who are divorced shall wait, keeping themselves apart three monthly courses. And it is not lawful for them that they should conceal that which Allah hath created in their wombs if they are believers in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands would do better to take them back in that case if they desire a reconciliation. And they (women) have right similar to those (of men) over them in kindness." (2 : 228)

The wife is to stay after divorce for three months and ten days ; and for four months ten days if she is a widow ; this is called "Iddat" (legally prescribed period of waiting during which a woman may not remarry after for being widowed or divorced) before she can marry another husband whereas the husband, who divorced her, can marry at the same moment. This is so, because of the would be pregnancy. Generally if a woman is pregnant, it

is known within the first hundred days of her pregnancy.

A very good step of divorce is shown in the following verse of the Qur'an :

".....so good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded and for those whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them in bed apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High, Exalted, Great." (4 : 34)

The family life should be harmonious. If anything goes wrong and there is any misunderstanding; four steps are to be taken to deal with such a situation : (1) verbal advice and admonition, (2) then the family relation is to be suspended, (3) after that slight physical correction (beating slightly) may be administered and the fourth is a family council to settle the differences if there is any.

No one is to lose his/her temper. There should be no nagging or sarcasm, they should speak to each other in other people's presence, nor should they remind each other of their forgotten faults of long ago because such faults have already been forgiven. They must always remember that Allah is always with them.

First the husband ; who uses his reasoning more than his emotions ; is asked to talk with her gently and explain to her that what she does angers Allah,

and nobody can bear it when Allah is angry with anyone. He should find out the reasons of her rebellion and solve the problems if he can.

He is to go with his advice to her for some time. He is to deal with her very tactfully. He should never hurry and get angry with her.

② This fails, then the family relation (husband/wife) is to be suspended. He is to banish her in bed apart. He is not to sleep with her in the same bed. He may be with her in the same room. If he can stay with her apart in the same room, that will be much better as a first step.

If he banishes her from bed apart, this will make her feel an infra dig. Feminism is the best and strongest weapon for any woman to attract a man, and make him follow her instructions. If a man banishes his wife, this act will pierce very deeply into the alter of her womanhood; thus the last stronghold of her's will have fallen. Then she might be in a position to listen to what her husband tells her.

③ If she still resists, then he is to administer a slight physical correction. He is to scourge her. When he flogs her, he should remember that he is beating his own wife. He should not beat her when he is angry; whatever the cause of his anger could be. The flogging must never leave any marks on her. It should be slight and not very painful.

The maxim: Spare the rod and spoil the child; stands true to the present time. Psychologists and

Educationists try to give different thoughts, ideas and arguments all discouraging scourging and beating. They have been trying this for the last thirty to fifty years. What are the results? Too many psychological and neurotic cases that need too many psychological clinics with scores of social workers and hundreds of psychologists and psycho-therapists. You see people being massaged, hypnotised or being given very good pieces of advice which the adviser himself will never practice, and the poor victims confess under the pressure and torture of suggestion. And worse still you find people indulge themselves into drugs, alcoholism, fornication, treachery, burglary, piracy, hypism, homosexuality and a hundred other evils that cost a society hundreds of billions of pounds trying to reduce such destructions.

Our daily life is full of reward and punishment. If we misuse our health we become sick and the like. So why for goodness sake do we discourage punishment at school at the same time we punish them when the same people do wrong elsewhere.

May I whisper to Muslim educationists? Islam tells us to teach our children till they are ten years of age. If they do not follow what we have been telling them all these years, then we are to flog them.

Coming back to our fourth point: family council to settle the differences or disputes between a married couple.

On this the Qur'an says:

Arbiters

"If ye fear breach between them twain, appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers. If they wish for peace Allah will cause their reconciliation for Allah hath full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things." (4 : 35)

The arbiters will know the facts and if they are all (arbiters and husband and wife) honest Allah will help them to effect a real reconciliation without any publicity or resorting to courts.¹

We have previously pointed out that man is much more rational than a woman. The husband-wife relation is of a more emotional in character, so Islam gave the man four different steps to deal with his rebellious wife, before taking the last weapon: Divorce.

A woman is much more emotional than a man, and as we have just discussed, the husband-wife relation is much more emotional than any other relationship between different people. So Islam has not much said about how should a wife deal with here rebellious husband. It left it to her (to deal with the situation). She knows very quickly; by her innate nature; the reasons of her husband's rebel-

1. It is reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent arbiters to reconcile. They returned and said, "We are not successful." He told them, "You are not honest." They went back and again and said, "Really, we were not honest." They succeeded in the second time.

Q. 10

lion or ill-conduct and she has all those strong weapons at her disposal to deal with such a situation.

Let us cite a good example of how a wife notices the signs of ill conduct or rebellion from her husband.

Hazrat Sawda bint Zam'a ; one of the wives of the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) noticed that her husband (The Prophet) was not so much encouraged to remain with her. Thinking of the problem, she finally came to the conclusion that it was because of her age. She was very old, or better still; the oldest of all his wives.

She decided on something very serious. She said to the Prophet something like this: "O! Messenger of Allah, I am too old to need a husband. I give my share and nights to Aisha, your youngest and beloved wife. What I want at this stage is to be among your wives in the Hereafter."

As a Mother

There are several verses in the Holy Qur'an that say in a clear cut way that kindness to one's parents is next only to Allah. But there should be no *Shirk* (polytheism) under whatsoever a banner. In this respect Qur'an tells us amazingly :

"We have enjoined on man kindness to parents ; but if they (either of them) strive to force thee to join with Me anything of which

thou hast no knowledge, obey them not....."

(Qur'an 29 : 8)

"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness lower to them thy wing of humility ; and say : "My Lord ! Bestow on them thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood." (Qur'an 17 : 23)

If there is conflict between our duty to Allah and our duty to our parents and those in authority, we are to obey Allah and disobey them in a kind, considerate and courteous way. We should never be arrogant. We learn this from the coming verses of the Qur'an :

"And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents. In travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning. *Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents. To Me is thy final Goal.*

"But if they strive to make the associate in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, *obey them not ; yet bear them company in this life (and consideration.....).*"

(Qur'an 31 : 14-15)

The mother is the one who suffers more than the father especially at the early stages of the child. The child remains in her womb for nine solid

months. At this period she undergoes several physical and psychological changes. Some of the mothers become sick and anaemic, while other pregnant women suffer in different ways.

After that she gives birth. Here she can get some sort of material aid from others such as nannies, baby sisters and a hundred and one other evils of our twentieth century *Jahilia*. The only person to look after a baby is the mother. Feeders are the worst things to use.¹ They are the carriers of all the diseases that attack our children especially in a backward society. Worst of all is that the bottle feeding media lacks the Heavenly maternal feeling that a child feels when he suckles from his mother's breast. That is why some of our scholars say that if a child does not complete a 24 months suckling period the father is to compensate him (giving him a share from property).

Because of all the troubles that a mother faces, the Holy Qur'an teaches us to be very kind to them. Let us read the following verse :

"We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents, in pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the child to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says : "O my Lord ! Grant me that I may be grateful

1. Please read : Fauzia Sheikh : *Breast Feeding and its Socio-Economic Significance* : Times of Oman.

for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents....."

(Qur'an 46 : 15)

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah give him peace) is quoted as saying what it meant :

"Paradise is under the feet of *mothers*."

"It is the generous in character who is good to women, and it is the wicked who insults them."

It is reported that a man came to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) and asked him the following :

"O Messenger of Allah, who is the most worthy of my company ?"

The Prophet said, "Your Mother."

The man asked, "Who is the next ?" with the same answer, "Your Mother." It was repeated with the same reply, only in the fourth time did the Prophet change his answer and said, "Your Father."

We learn from such Ahadith (Sayings of the Prophet—may Allah give him peace) how Islam honours and respects the mother.

Keeping a Good Company

".....But consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good."

(Qur'an 4 : 19)

May I repeat here once again the three Ahadith

(Sayings of the Prophet). It is reported that he said :

"The best of you is the best of you to his family and I am the best of you to my family."

"Lo many women came to Muhammad's wives complaining against their husbands beating them ; those are not the best of you."¹

"A male Muslim should never hate a female Muslim (wife) because, if he hates some of her manners he is sure to like others."

"Truly a woman is like a rib. If you try to straighten it, you are sure to break it, but if you leave it as it is, you will enjoy with it while it is a bit bent."

The husband is told to be more patient and should not be angry with her quickly, as she is more emotional ; he should therefore be somewhat rational.

"The most perfect believers are the best in conduct and the best of you are the best of you to their wives."

No husband is to spy on his wife. He should not tell her : for example ; that : "I shall not come back tonight. I shall go to such and such a place." And he comes at midnight knocking at the door spying on her.

The husband is to maintain his family in its wide and narrow sense of the word (family :

1. Riad Droubie : *The Status of Woman in Islam*. (Courtesy : Minaret House).

Husband, wife and children and the Eastern type of Joint Family).

He is to provide his wife with all the necessary means of leisure according to his means. He should cut his coat according to his cloth.

He should consort with her and respect her feelings. If she did anything unbecoming, he is not to reprimand her before visitors or anyone else (especially before their own children).

He should take good care of her personal property and should never spend a penny without her consent.

Both of them are required to preserve personal secrets of the other. Neither of them is to tell people anything of their intimate family life.

He is to allow her to visit her parents. It would be better if he sent her to visit them now and then.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) told Abdullah b. 'Amr bin al-'Aas, who was fasting daily and spending his nights in prayers: ".....Do not do that, fast and break fast (do not fast for some days) and sleep. Truly your body has rights on you, your eyes.....and your wife has (her legal) rights on you.....Give each its rights."

Right of Ownership

Islam fully acknowledges the woman's right of an independent ownership in her money, real estate or on any other properties. This right does not

undergo any changes whether she is single or married; whether she acquired the property before marriage or after it. She retains her full rights upon her property whether selling, buying it or otherwise.

A woman used to be an object of inheritance. This went on, in some cultures, as late as the nineteenth century, while Islam gave her the right of inheritance 1,400 years ago. She has the full right on her share of inheritance, it is completely hers. Neither her father, husband, mother or anyone else could make any claim on her share of an inheritance. It is hers.

The Holy Quran says:

"Unto men of the family belongs a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, and unto women a share of that which parents and near kindred leave:—whether it be a little or much—a determined share." (Qur'an 4 : 7)

Her share of inheritance is governed by certain factors, whether there are sons and daughters, or the only child in the family etc. etc.

We shall appreciate this more if we remember that as late as the twelfth century a wife was sold in some cultures soon after the death of her husband. Her luck was not even better in Arabia, because she did not inherit anything from her parents or her husband.

She Retains Her Maiden Name

Over and above all this, she must retain her full identity : *her maiden name*. Suppose a Fatima Mohammad ar-Riyamy marries a Khalfan Moosa an-Na'asaany. She never changes her name and become a Mrs. Na'asaany. No and never. Her doing so (change of name) is regarded by some of the scholars as completely un-Islamic, that is a sin.

The wife retains her identity while she is with her husband, and when he dies or divorces her and she marries another man there is no such nuisance of rechanging of names for the third or fourth times. Her first maiden (father's) name is hers till she dies.

Going back into history we find that nearly all Christian women lose their maiden names soon after marriage as she has to sign her maiden name for the last time in the Church register after the wedding ceremonies. It was only, of all that I know, Lucy Stone, one of the most famous speakers on the movement to emancipate women, that retained her maiden name as a protest against the unequal laws applicable to married women. She became known as Mrs. Stone and not as Mrs. Blackwell.¹

It is also said that some of the Slavonic tribes gave the woman a choice of whether to retain her maiden name or change it to that of her husband's.

1. *Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropedia, Vol. IX p. 585 with adaptations).*

Political Rights

Throughout the history of Islam, we find a Muslim woman is given full political rights. Women took part in serious discussions and argued even with the Messenger of Allah himself (may Allah give him peace). Through our reading of the following verses of the Holy Qur'an we know how Islam gave her political rights :

“Allah has indeed heard (and accepted) the statement of the woman who pleads with thee concerning her husband and carries her complaint (in prayer) to Allah, and Allah (always) hears the arguments between both sides among you : for Allah hears and sees (all things).

(58 : 1)

“O ye who believe, when there come to you believing women refugees, examine (and test) them Allah knows best as to their faith : if ye ascertain that they are Believers then send them not back to the Unbelievers. They are not lawful (wives) for the Unbelievers, nor are the (Unbelievers) lawful (husbands) for them. But pay the Unbelievers what they have spent (on the dower.....).” (60 : 10 see also 66 : 11)

It is reported the Caliph 'Umar said what it meant : “We never paid any attention to whatever was said by a woman before Islam, nor did we ask her any advice. It was only the teaching of Islam that gave her full rights as reasonable being.

'I was once thinking and pondering over something important when my wife suggested that I had better do this and that. I told her to stop that as it was none of her business.'

'She told me : 'What is wrong with you O Ibn al-Khattaab ? You do not want to be given any advice while your daughter argues with the Prophet till he becomes angry.'"

'I went straight to Hafsa and asked her : "Tell me ; daughter ; what is it that you discuss with the Apostle till you make him angry ?"

She responded, "Yes, father ! All his wives do. It is natural. (He sometimes remains angry for the whole day because of our arguments with him)".

Caliph 'Umar was once discussing with Muslims in a Mosque (as it is not only a place of worship, but also the Parliament, the Court, the Army Headquarters, the Muslim Government itself) certain problems. A woman corrected him and made him declare before the public : "*The woman is RIGHT and 'Umar is wrong.*"

One might argue pointing out that there is a Prophet's saying which mean that no country will prosper if it were led by a woman. It has nothing to do with the dignity of women, neither does it hinder her rights. It is rather due to the natural differences in the biological and psychological set up of the two sexes.

According to Islamic Law the Head of the State is not just a figure head. He is the centre of all

activities. He is the chief justice, He must lead people in prayers, especially Friday prayers (Juma) and on religious festivities. He leads people in Jihaad (religious wars) against non-Muslims for the well being of humanity)

During the monthly periods and during pregnancy, women generally undergo frequent psychological changes ; let alone the monthly changes of her hormones (which generally happens twice a month) the kind which makes a woman become more emotional than rational.

Health and Education—Most Suitable Occupations

Had mothers brought up their children themselves and without the help of nannies, maids or baby-sisters, I am sure that most of the mental hospitals, psychological clinics, would have to close down because there would have not been cases that needed their outmost care. The psychotherapists would have to find some other jobs to do.

A child needs maternal care more than anything else ; especially during his early infant stage if we really need a good and mentally healthy society.¹ And that is why Islam regarded the woman's role in a society as that of a mother and a

1. Have you ever noticed a child of under two years of age would weep if taken by a stranger whom he meets for the first time ? Please notice a child of three who does not like to be away from home more than 20 metres and when playing has its own toys. A child of five forms the best international society. There is no discrimination.

wife, which is the most essential one in any healthy society. The society whose members are upright, complex free and carefully reared members.

Hence *the best* jobs for a woman are those pertaining to Health and Education.¹ I said, "*The Best*" and I did not say *The Only*. She can do good in any other field as well, but these are the two fields which satisfy her nature more ; therefore, she can contribute better to the well being of humanity in general. Not only that, but also she learns more about human nature.

Islam does *not* restrict a society from benefiting from any exceptionally talented woman in any field.

Woman Participates in many Affairs

Abu Jahal was torturing Sumayya at the point of death forcing her to abuse Prophet Muhammad and Allah and praise the gods of Quraish Tribe : He told her if she did not do what he asked her she won't see the evening of that day any more as she was going to die before sunset. Sumayya answered him in a very low and separated and interrupted voice : "Fie to you and your gods and misfortune befell on you. Is there anything better for me than death that will release me from seeing this ugly face of yours ?" Her words and the unexpected outburst of laughter from both 'Utba

1. She can work as a nurse, nursing sister, doctor, teacher, lecturer, school Principal or Visiting Teacher.

and Shaiba bin Rabii'a made Abu Jahal so furious that he could control himself no longer. He thrust her with a lance. She became the *First Martyr* in Islam.¹

We have seen in the Introduction that two members (Nusaiba and Asma'a) out of the 75 Yathrib (Medina) delegation to ask the Prophet (peace be upon him) to migrate to Medina were women. We shall appreciate it more if we remember that these things had happened during the sixth and seventh centuries (of the Christian Era) at the time when in other parts of the world (in Europe) conferences were being held to discuss if a woman was human or not, whether she was with or without a soul and whether she was to worship god or otherwise.

We see Muslim women taking part in Jihād (the religious wars against non-Muslims for the well being of humanity) during the period of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) and after. Their main task was in the following fields ; Ambulance mending and making clothes for the army, preparing food for them, giving them water, nursing and all other essential needs.

Aisha bint Abu Bakar and 'Umme 'Aiman al-Habashiyya and some other Muslim ladies took part in the battle of Uhud. They were giving water to the soldiers, taking care of the wounded and consoling them.

1. By the writer 'Waliosilimu Mwanzo (The First Muslim): Crescent P. Press : Zanzibar : 1963.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was wounded it was Aisha who ran looking for straws and old mats. She burnt them and took the ash to heal wounds of the Messenger of Allah.

Nusaiba led a woman delegation to the Apostle of Allah asking him to give them permission to take part in the Jihād as men do. He asked them: "What can you (women) do, O Nusaiba?" She responded: "We can mend clothes, take care of the injured and wounded by tending and consorting them, cure the sick and give water to all."

She even took part in the actual fighting, to protect the Prophet.

In the battle of the confederates Safia bint 'Abd Al-Muttalib (Hamza's sister) killed one of the Jews who were spying for the enemy of Islam.

Zainab the daughter of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) mediated or asked her father to protect Abul 'Aas bin ar-Rabī" (at the time when he was still an infidel) from Abul Baseer and it was granted after he consulted Muslims. No sooner had this stroke of kindness fell on Abul 'Aas heart when he embraced Islam.

Safia (Zubair bin Al-'Awwām's mother) was one of those who took part in the Khybar battle. She was afraid for her son Zubair being killed. The Prophet told her that Zubair was going to kill his foe.¹

1. Moh'd al-Ghazaali : *Fiqh as Sairat* : Mataabia Ali bin Ali Qatar : Doha.

In the battle of Yarmouk some Muslim ladies were taken as war prisoners. They wanted to fight for their freedom. They had no weapons with them. They fought with ordinary poles, sticks and pegs from the tents. The freedom battle was led by Khawla bint al-Azwar.

The Muslim woman played a very important role in Islam. Her life was not confined to the house. No, she went out taking part in different walks of life under the banner of Sharia protecting her chastity, and not forgetting her primary role in life is that of *Wife* and *Mother*.

Islam always benefits from the exceptionally talented Muslim woman in any field.

Ali Yahya Mu'ammār in his book *al-Abādhiyya fi Mawkibit Taarikh* (Ibadhi through History)¹ mentioned many Muslim women of North Africa who played very important role in shaping Islam. You could find this in a chapter under the heading ; *al-Mar-atul Muslimatu fi Libya* (Muslim Woman in Libya).

Let us quote just one example from Mu-ammār :

"(7) Ummu Yahya ; the pious, highly educated and most able teacher ; lived at Amsiyin between Jailaat and Timjaarah," somewhere in Jebel Nafusa (Libya).

1. Ibadhi is a misunderstood Muslim sect led by Jabir bin Zaid (a Taabii-follower) mostly found in Oman, East and North Africa and Tashkent. Misnamed by one of the Jabir's students : Abdulla bin Abaadh.

"She felt that girl's education was not complete if she learnt in boys' schools. She thought that had she been able to open a girls' school, that would have provided opportunities for girls to study upto the final stages of education.....She opened a girls school and opened also what is now called "A Girls' Hostel" for those girls who live in far different places.....She directed her students into a variety of walks of life.....She found employment for some, and arranged marriage for others, and further studies for those who wanted to go on with their studies.

Let us sum up our article with that Dr. Inamullah said in his articles : The Holy Prophet : A Blessing for the teeming millions :

"He (the Prophet) came to grant woman her rightful place in the society of man, raising her above the position of goods and chattels and granting her a respectful entity and a personality to herself. She was considered an independent social and economic unit functioning in her own individual right, if she so desired. For the first time she was given the right to education, the right to hold property in her own name, the right of inheritance, and above all, the right to vote, and pray. What is the right to vote, but to have the legal right for a free expression of opinion or choice. Human history fails to give that place of pride which the Holy Prophet gave to woman. His words : "Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother" are eternal, a sparkling and glowing tribute to the status of woman."

Polygamy

Volume 16 of *Everyman's Encyclapedia* has the following to say under the title of Polygamy :

Polygamy : Marriage with more than one spouse simultaneously. It is of the two varieties :

- (1) **Polygamy** : One man and several wives.]
- (2) **Polyandry** : One wife with several husbands."

We shall try here to discuss both types of Polygamy : polygyny and polyandry as we consider them as two sides of the same coin : One person from one sex marries several persons from another sex simultaneously.

Let us take a supersonic flight back to times immemorial and then back again to the present.

Polyandry

Polyandry was in vogue in many parts of the Near and Far East. It is still today used in one form or another in Bhutan (Tibet), Assam and India.

Polyandry in its simplest form is as this :

The eldest brother generally marries a wife, and she naturally becomes the wife of the whole family. Generally the co-husbands are brothers or very near relatives.

One might ask : "For goodness sake ! What is the result of all this ?"

It is strange though to note that members of such a family are *Little* addicted to jealousy. Whenever anyone feels any sort of jealousy, he nips it in the bud for the common good. They call it team spirit.

The co-husbands club together and cling to one another and each is prepared to sacrifice for the interest of the family.

When the wife gives birth to a baby, then, sometimes dispute arises. Each claims to be the father of the child. More often than not they compare the features of the child with those of its several fathers. Sometimes the matter is completely left to the determination of the mother. This is somewhat similar to what Pre-Islamic Arab woman used to do, as we shall see later.

Polyandry is dying away gradually.

Polygyny

Polygyny is marriage of one man with more than one wife simultaneously. It is generally done like this :

A man marries the eldest daughter of a certain family. He has the full marriage privileges and rights

over all the other younger daughters (sisters) of the family of his wife. Another person, say Mr. B. marries the third daughter of the same family. The marriage privileges and rights of Mr. B. will be confined to the younger sisters of his wife and not to those older than his wife. That is to say ; if you marry the eldest daughter, you become the husband of all her sisters ; but if you marry a daughter somewhere in the middle ; you are entitled to her younger sisters only and not to the older ones. This is practised more in China and India.

Some of the Eastern people regard Polygyny as the best form of marriage. It is much more practised by the people of high status and the rich. They do this more or less because of economic drives.

It is customary in the East that a lot of people come to an important person daily ; either for some business, visit or just drop in and say hello. These people generally come from very far places and there are not well organized means of communications and there are no good restaurants or coffee houses where people could have a quick meal. They cannot take with them wrapped lunch. For these are many other reasons, (we should not forget the hospitality of the East) ; these important people have to supply some sort of food to the people who are present during lunch time. (It necessitates a lot of women to spend hours in the kitchen preparing food etc., for the guests.)

There is another type of Polygyny which is much more common. One man marries more than one wife from different families. This is what we are going to discuss in detail.

In China

Polygamy of one sort or another was practised in China. A man had the principal wife. He might have secondary wives if he wished to. All the progenies from all the wives, whether the principal one or from secondary ones, were regarded as legitimate children of their father.

This is what we learn from *Encyclopedia Britannica* Vol. 4, Page 409. It reads as follows :

"A man might take only one principal wife, but secondary wives were permitted, children of both being recognized as legitimate. It was common for poor families to take a girl into their families as an extra daughter, who, with less ceremony, later became a bride for one of their sons."

In Hinduism

Hinduism encourages Polygyny in one respect or another.

Reading Manu's *Dharma Shastra* we come across such an indirect encouragement on polygyny :

".....A wife who speaks unkindly may be put aside without delay. If a wife drinks, shows hatred to her husband and Lord, plays

mischievous or wastes his property, she is superseded any time by another wife."

In Vedic times, that is, before Manu compiled his institutions, the normal practice in the Indian society was monogamy.

During the sacrifice both husband and wife sat as equals at the hearth. It was the wife who was responsible for the sacred vessels and it was she who prepared the sacrifice.

In modern India the wife suffers the evil of giving up her position in her home to another wife if she is not blessed with a son. To stop this from happening, she offers expensive presents to the gods, endures severe fasts and many other religious rituals in order to be blessed with at least one son.

It was then, in parts of India, customary for a man to marry many wives, some of whom he never saw or maintained. But this practice has by now gradually died down. Just because most of those wives live as a burden on their fathers, as we have said before that their husbands rarely saw them or maintained them. Not only that, but some of those wives being very young and full of vigour, often fall victim to sexual temptation.

In worship most girls would prefer Siva Puja to Krishna Puja. Simply because Siva was devoted to his wife while Krishna despoiled himself with countless milkmaids.

The worship to ward off the evil of polygyny is

observed and is called Sanjuti Vrata. It is done like this :

A girl (woman) would paint a number of objects on the floor, some of which are a man and a woman, the Ganges and Jumna rivers and the temple of Siva. She would ask Siva for his blessings. She would then curse her *Saukan* (rival wife).

When we read Buddhism, we feel that Gautama Buddha doesn't take much interest in women and in any form of married life. We find him leaving his wife, Yasodhara, with his newly born child without looking at him. He meets his son ; Rahula ; seven years later and he makes him a disciple.

A group of people go out on a picnic with their wives, one of them had a prostitute instead of a wife. She steals and runs away. They look for her. They meet with Buddha who tells them to look into their souls and cleanse them. They become his disciples.

One day on his way back Ananda saw an untouchable (the lowest caste in India) girl whom he asked for water. She refused but then gave him water to drink. They decided to marry. Buddha summoned Prakriti, Ananda's fiancée till, she became a nun.

Queen Mahapajapati, Buddha's aunt and rival wife of his mother's, who brought Buddha up after the death of his mother, came with some ladies asking Buddha to accept them in the Sauyya. Buddha refused and became adamant. It was Ananda who

persuaded him to accept them under very strict conditions.

In Judaism

Judaism did not limit the number of wives one could have at a time. It was customary to have more than one wife.

Abraham (Ibrahim) had more than one wife. He had Sarai (Saara) who gave birth to Isaac, the progenitor of Israilites, and Haggar (Haagir) who also gave birth to Ishmael (Ismail), the progenitor of the Arabs :

"Abram's wife Sarai had not borne him any children. But she had an Egyptian slave girl, named Haggar, and so she said to Abraham, 'The Lord has kept me from having children. Why don't you sleep with my slave girl ? Perhaps she can have a child for me.' Abraham agreed with what Sarai said. So she gave Haggar to him to be his concubine." (Genesis, 16 : 1 to 3)

It is reported that David (Dawood) had more than one hundred wives. If we read the following quotation from the Bible, we know that he had more than one wife :

"The following six sons, in the order of their birth, were borne to David at Hebron : Amon whose mother was Abinoam from Jezreel. Chileab whose mother was Abigail, Nabal's widow from Carnel ; Absalom whose mother

was Maacab ; the daughter of King Talmai of Geshur ; Adonijah whose mother was Haggith ; Shephatiah whose mother was Abital ; Ithream whose mother was Eglah. All these sons were born in *Hebron*." (2 Samuel : 3 : 2 to 5)

It seems that David had other children born to him somewhere else.

It is said that Solomon (Suleiman) had a thousand women ; wives and concubines.

Quote
"Solomon loved many foreign women. Besides daughter of the king of Egypt he married Hittite women and women from Moab, Ammon, Edon, and Sedon Solomon married seven hundred princesses and also had three hundred concubines"

(1 Kings 11 : 1 and 3)

In Christianity

✓ It was not specifically mentioned in Christianity that no one was to marry more than one wife. If we analyse : "God created a *Wife* for every *Man*" we come to the conclusion that it encourages man to get married and not to practice monasticism. It tells men : "There are sufficient women for all of you, so get married and do not live alone." Even if we take what Paul had said which means : "Every prelate is to be husband of one wife" we come to two important conclusions : It is directed to Bishops and Priests as a whole, but not to the public in

general. And it urges them to get married and not remain alone.

Commenting on early Christian attitude towards sex *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 16, Page 599 has the following to say :

" Since sex epitomizes the flesh, it was obviously the enemy of the spirit. While Judaism subscribed to this dichotomous philosophy, it did have the saving grace of largely exempting marriage from its anti-sexuality. This was not the case with early Christianity in which sex in any form outside marriage was unmitigated evil and, within marriage an unfortunate necessity from procreation rather than pleasure. The powerful anti-sexuality of the early Christians (note that neither God nor Christ has a wife and that marriage does not exist in heaven) was in part due to their apocalyptic vision of life : they anticipated that the end of the world and the Last Judgement would soon be upon them. There was no time for a gradual weaning away from the flesh, an immediate and drastic approach was necessary."

The above quotation throws a green light as to how early Christians interpreted sexual life and the end of the world. No wonder then, when we hear St. Paul telling Corinthians such things about male-female relations.

In his letters to Corinthians, St. Paul had the following to say :

"A man does well not to marry. But because there is so much immorality, every man should have his own wife, and every woman should have her own husband Don't deny yourselves to each other, unless you first agree to do so for a while in order to spend your time in prayer, but then resume normal marital relations."

" Actually I would prefer that all of you are as I am, but each one has a special gift from God ; one person this gift, another person that gift. Now to the unmarried and to the widows I say that it would be better for you to continue to live alone as I do. But if you cannot restrain your desires, go ahead and marry—it is better to marry than to burn in passion. For married people I have a command which is not my own but the *Lord's*: a wife must not leave her husband, but if she does, she must remain single or else be reconciled to her husband ; and a husband must not divorce his wife."

"Have you got a wife ? Then don't try to get rid of her. Are you unmarried : Then don't look for a wife. But if you do marry ; you haven't committed a sin ; and if an unmarried woman marries, she hasn't committed a sin. But I would rather spare you the everyday troubles that married people will have."

"I am saying this because I want to help you. I am not trying to put restrictions on

you. Instead, I want you to do what is right and proper"

(1 Corinthians 7 : 1 & 5 : 7 to 10 : 27 & 28 : 35)

During the Lutheran period we see Philip and Fredrick Wilhem II get married to more than one wife after the approval of the Church and after the approval of Luther himself.

In 1650 there was a Conference in Nurenberg where it was agreed to allow people to marry more than one wife so as to solve the problem of under population because of the wars.

King Edward VII tried to enact a law permitting people to marry more than one wife, but the clergy did not agree because it was not the proper time for it.

It is also reported that Hitler was about to make it lawful for anyone who would like to marry more than one wife, he could do so ; but the World War II did not give him time for it.

When the Muslim members of the delegation at the Conference in Munchen in 1948 suggested that the best solution for the problem of the excess number of German unmarried women was to allow polygamy, all the other members present were taken aback. But later on all of them took part in the discussion. The result of which made the people of Bonn in 1949 send a petition to the authorities asking them for the same (Permission for Polygamy

(or something like it).¹

One of the European thinkers commenting on the rules of European marriage said :

"All the rules of European countries pertaining to marriage are not good as they made man equal to woman. This made us lose 50% of our rights, and it increased more duties on us. As it gave her equal rights with man, it should have also given her the same mentality and thinking as that of man. No woman would not like to be a legal wife of somebody who would take full responsibility of her maintenance. Married women in our society are very few and the number of unmarried ones surpassed them in degrees. The consequences are that we have a lot of brothels"²

In Africa

Polygamy is very common in Africa especially in places where there are very few adherents of Islam. This is contrary to what many a Western could expect.

If we take a full survey of African marriage life we come to the following : Majority of Africans tend to be polygamous. More than 20% of the African males are polygamous. The places that we may find monogamy much in practice are Ethiopia,

1. Dr. Mustafa as-Sibaa'iy, *al-Mar'a bainash Sharia wa Qaanuun* with adaptations.

2. Ibid.

Berber States north and west of Sahara, and a few nomadic tribes found here and there, who live on hunting.

It is very difficult to know the exact reasons or drives to this. It could be because of a diversity of reasons, the main ones could be the climate and economic ones.

An African woman has to perform all the daily household chores. She is to prepare and cook the food, clean the house and wash clothes. She is to fetch water ; generally from very deep well and collect firewood. She has sometimes to walk long distances for water and firewood. Not only that, but she must help her husband in the fields, and rear cattle. All this is done in addition to bringing up of her children. (This is generally found all over the East at different epochs and under varying degrees).

She toils under such circumstances. I am sure, she will accept, with open hands, any sort of assistance that could come from whatsoever source available. I should be afraid to tell her that the only assistance for her under such circumstances is the *Mke Mwenza* (a second or rival wife).

Any how, it is interesting to note that the African wives have a very good status compared with their contemporaries in other parts of the East—with the exception of Muslim wives. They are sometimes given livestock and pieces of land as their very own property.

European Missionaries in Africa

When the European missionaries went to Africa with the idea of monogamy, they were faced with the aforementioned deeply rooted habit of polygamy. They tried their level best to stop it or at least to minimize it, but all their endeavour did not bear any fruit.

(Early Fathers allowed people under special circumstances and at certain places to have more than one wife. The same state of affairs went on in Europe up to the seventeenth century).

After long discussions the same old habit (or permission to have more than one wife under certain circumstances at certain places) which was stopped sometimes in the seventeenth century was to be put into practice once again in the nineteenth century and in Africa. It was not a good policy to interfere with *Pagan* social practice of the African. Let them have as many wives as they liked, so long as they believed in Christianity.

It is reported that Jesus said, "Think not that I have come to abolish but to fulfil them."¹ So in that case it was better for the missionary not to force African Christians to practice monogamy. It will naturally come.

Mormons in America

The Mormons (Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints founded by Joseph Smith

1. Mathew 5 : 17, 18.

in 1830 in Utah : USA) practise theocracy and polygamy were successful in their prophecy because of polygamy.

Mormons think that neither the Protestants nor the Catholic depict the true Christianity as it was taught by Jesus the Christ.

One of their leaders, Young by name, had about 20 wives.

There was no limit as to the number of wives one could marry at a time. It is said that one of their wives when asked about polygamy, she responded : "I prefer to be the tenth wife of a man of good reputation rather than be his only mistress."

Protestants waged wars against Joseph Smith and his followers and put all kinds of obstacles to stop the idea of polygamy from its widespread.

By 1850 the Mormons were able to have their own settlements. They tilled land and had some sort of industry as well as manufactured goods.

If you ever come across anyone of them and happen to ask him a question about polygamy ; he would shower you with something like this : "Yes, man, I have three (or four or six) wives. What is wrong with it, man ? If you ask anybody his idea about women, he will tell you that he would like to have more than one ; and he really has them. So why do we not allow him to have them through legal means. We are sickly tired of having children of the spinsters and a hundred and one red spots in any particular society, where prostitution was being

practised on a large scale. Oh ! brothel, the worst type of a house I would like to see." etc., etc.

A Call from an English Lady

Dr. Mustafa as-Sibaa'iy in his book : *al-Mar'a buina al-Fiqh wa-l-Qaanun* (Woman between Jurisprudence and Law) says that Lagos Weekly Record of 20th April, 1901 quoted an article from London Truth written by an English lady. The gist of the article is : "The number of vagabond girls has increased, and it has caused a nuisance in our society. Being a woman I look at these poor girls with pity. But will my pity and sympathy do anything to change things or help cure such illness ? What Thomas said was excellent. He diagnosed the disease and prescribed medicine for it. He said the only medicine was to allow man to marry more than one wife, through which the calamity will be erased ; as the girls will then be housewives. The European tribulation is : "One husband one wife" what is the culmination for married men-to one wife-with illegitimate children who (children) are a great slur and burden upon the society. Had polygamy been permitted, no such thing would have happened."

The above quoted article was written 77 years ago before the tragedy of the two World Wars, and when there were between 800,000 and 1,000,000 prostitutes in London only.

Had Arthur Schopenhauer or the lady who wrote the above article been living today what would they have said ?

The idea of nonchallance from authorities the world over helped the widespread and the increase of call girls in many parts of the world. This is the aftermath of the World Wars when a lot of men died and women remained without husbands.

Beauty Queens and Film Stars

One of the ills of the Neo Jahilia (pagan)¹ is the over dose of the mass media for the propagation of the worship of beauty queens and women film stars. People have become mad about it and can no more resist the temptation. It is too tempting to be resisted.

But has the film star or beauty queen anything to do with the subject we are talking about ?

Yes, it is the most relevant part of our topic. It is these two—film star and beauty queen that instigate directly or indirectly the youth to have as many illegal wives as could be obtained.

The beauty queen represents the most dangerous weapon for our youth. It is a much more fatal weapon than any other people could invent. It penetrates to the very bottom of the heart of our young boys who did not have much, and for some, non-religious foundation or background.

The young man sees before him by means of the Gogle Box or a live view of the most beautiful and

1. Jahilia is an Arabic word which means ignorance (pagan). It was used by Qur'an to mean Pre-Islamic period. Used in this book to mean Neo Ignorance which is worse than that of the Pre-Islamic epoch.

attractive young girl with so soft but young skin who even an aged man could look at her unmoved—such a tender flesh before his eyes, every piece of it is delicately shaken, and with such an attractive posture, with such beautiful melted eyes that you feel they will soon fall out of their cavity and socket. The girl had natural beauty but had been made more beautiful by the best International Beauty Parlour.

The Queen of Beauty Business is a new invention. It was there before the two World Wars. But after the World War II and after the loss of millions of men because of the wars¹ there were millions of widows, women and girls, all unmarried; as there were no sufficient men to marry them. Each had his wife, and he was not allowed to marry another. Hence the Beauty Queen got momentum: Regional, National and International ones. The inner reason was and still is to attract men, especially married ones, so that they may betray their wives and commit adultery and sometimes even elope together *i.e.*, the poor man's divorce.

The rich man would give such a beautiful girl thousands of pounds, because he was able to snatch a kiss from her before the public at the General Auction of her flesh. He might even sign a will for her out of his property, as he had spent a night or

1. The loss in the World War I was 10 millions and in the World War II more than 60 millions: Mahmoud Shait Khattaab: *'Ar Rasul al-Qaa-id*.

so with her. He would not hesitate to deprive his family of their right to property and give it to his darling, just because she was able to give him a temporary satisfaction, while his wife was not able to do so.

Allah knows how many illegal husbands did our beauty queen have before they accept her as a regional, national or international queen of beauty. She must have sacrificed the best thing a woman could be proud of having; her honour and respect; for the sake of such a temporary fame.

The situation is not better with some of the woman secretaries and actresses, especially if the boss is sexy.

Many a secretary caused calamities to many families. They made husbands deprive their families of their property. Some of them went even farther, as they caused the divorce of poor, innocent wives.

The Neo Jahilia is full of corruptions. There are some people who marry their fellow men and commit homosexuality. This ultimately causes the divorce of the very young and beautiful wives.

It is not strange, then, to hear that some of the fair and weak sex, who cannot get married try to find some sort of satisfaction with their pet animals; such as dogs, if they cannot get it from their male servants.

When some of the film producers find a native beautiful poor country girl; they monopolize her and she becomes their milchcow. They utilize her

to their best advantage. They focus all the lights upon her using her beauty. Whatever thing is being over used it fades away. She then uses all the newly invented make-ups to cosmetic her bygone beauty, lest she is sacked off once another victim is found.

Oh ! those poor wretched film stars ! They spend their life in studios, making models, having hundreds of illegal husbands without enjoying the true family life as they should if they were married.

No sooner do we hear that one of the film stars got married, then we hear that she is being divorced and is going to marry such and such a person. Her inner self tells her she is secure neither in her work nor in her family life. She does the change of husbands unconsciously thinking that she might get a better family life with the new husband.

What is the result of this insecurity ? *Suicide.*

Dr. Mustafa as-Sibaa'iy in his book : *al-Mar'a baina al-Fiqh wal-Qaanun* cites a good example of such an end.

He says that a letter was found which threw a green light on the case of Marylin Monroe on the reason of her committing suicide and at the same time the letter serves as a *Very good piece of advice* to young girls. Marylin's letter was addressed to *the girl* and to every woman who wanted to work for the cinema. She had the following advice ; which means :

"Beware of Glory....Be precautions with everyone who attracts you before the light.....*I am the most wretched woman in this world.....I was not able to become a wife.....I am a woman who prefers a house-have life....an honest family life to anything else....Truly, the true happiness for a woman is in the clean, honest family life. But this family life is the symbol of happiness of woman, nay but of humanity.....*

"All the people treated me unjustly..... Really, work in cinema makes woman a cheap commodity, worthless thing, whatever false glory and fame she can attain....."

In Arabia (Pre-Islamic)

In Jahilia (Pre-Islamic Ignorance) a woman would take several men as her illegal husbands. When she gave birth to a child, she would call them all, and say to them ; "Look here ! I gave birth to this child. This babe is yours Mr. so and so." She would mention someone among her many illegal husbands. Sometimes they would look at the features of the baby and compared them with the features of those present and decided to whom the child belonged. Generally there were no quarrels.

It was customary in Arabia to have as many wives as one could. At the advent of Islam, Arabs had many wives. Some had even up to ten wives.

When the Quranic verse limited the number of wives, one could have at a time, as to four there

were some Muslims who had more than four and they did not know what to do.

Some of those Muslims who had more than four wives at the time, when the verse limiting the wives to four was revealed, went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) asking him what should they do.

Nawfal bin Mu'aawiya said: "I had five wives and when I told the Prophet about them; he told me 'Choose any four you like and divorce the last one.'

'Umayr al-Asady said, "I embraced Islam while I had eight wives. I told the Prophet about them and he told me: "Choose any four out of them."

No Polyandry in Islam

Islam forbids Polyandry

In Islam a child must be called after the name of its natural father; and under polyandry it is very difficult to pin point the real father of the child, as there could be more than two husbands to the wife.

It also refutes the idea of polygyny under which a husband has marriage rights over the younger sisters of his wife. To this Qur'an gives a full list of those one may not marry:

"Forbidden unto you are your mothers and, your daughters, and your sisters, and your fathers' sisters (aunts); and your mother's sisters, and your brothers' daughters and your sisters' daughters and your foster mothers and your foster sisters, and your mother-in-law, and your step-daughters who are under your protection (born) of your women unto whom ye have gone in but if ye have not gone in unto them, then it is no sin for you (to marry their

daughters)—and the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins. *And (it is forbidden unto you) that ye have TWO SISTERS together, except what has already happened (of that nature) in the past...*" (Qur'an 4 : 23)

It is forbidden in Islam to marry two sisters together because there could be misunderstanding between them, instead of mutual understanding and cooperation. But one can marry his former wife's sister provided he had divorced the first one and the Iddat is over or after her death.

No Mistress in Islam

Islam strictly opposes the idea of a man keeping a woman without first marrying her. It also forbids men to go to houses of pleasure, where they can easily contact with all sorts and kinds of people. Contagious diseases can easily spread in the community. A man who does these things loses prestige and respect in his family, contemporaries and the society as a whole.

The offspring from such a mixture, that is out of wedlock becomes a burden to the society. They are generally unsettled and neurotic if they are lucky enough to survive, because usually their mothers get rid of them somehow to hide away from shame.

During school age a fatherless child is not only burden to society, but to himself as well ; because he had hardly got full parental love (especially the paternal love). His situation is worse than that of

another child of a separated family. The ultimate result could easily be a criminal, hitting back, as it were, against the society at large which had put a stigma on fatherless men and women. This is more so in the Eastern societies.

The Natural Law

It is true to say that Allah has made and created us as individuals therefore people differ very much in their constitution. We find that some men are more virile than others; therefore they need more than one wife. Islam provides an excellent solution in allowing a man to marry up to a maximum of four wives, provided he gives them equal maintenance and deals with them justly.

Islam is the natural law. It is the human law. It goes side by side with his innate requirements. It corresponds with the dynamic wishes of different epochs.

From times immemorial to the present day our daily life depicts cases of certain people who are more virile than others. Their sexual urge is so strong that they have to find some means of satisfaction. They find difficulty if they cannot get satisfaction from their wives, at a time when the wives are under certain circumstances that stop them from satisfying their husbands.

Islam has arranged and solved this problem in the best form. It has given chance to those who are not satisfied with one wife to have more than one in the legal and legitimate way.

It should not be misunderstood and thought that polygamy is for the sexually abnormal people only. No, it is not so. It is more than that. It solves many other problems as well.

One of the good things that ploygamy does is to increase the Muslim population, where it is not as high as it is expected. Take for example : Libya, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia or Pakistan ; where Allah has endowed the first with petroleum, the second with perpetual spring, the third with fertility of virgin land, the fourth with three rivers (Tigris, Euphrates and petroleum) the fifth with minerals and the sixth with cultivable land, so to speak, with enough rain, sunshine and fertile soils for food production for home use and export in exchange for other essentials needed. And in this way we could go a long way in helping FAO and other International Organisations that tell us that the world is going to starve if it does not take to birth control and family planning.

Muslim countries can learn a lot about agriculture from Arturo Tanco ; the Philippines Secretary of Agriculture ; who manster-minded and implemented his country's programmes which enabled his country which once was rice deficit country to build up enormous rice buffer stocks.

Philippine uses the most up-to-date weapons to fight Muslims ; Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on one hand ; and on the other uses the most up-to-date methods of agriculture to fight the poverty stricken country to one self-sufficient in

food stuff. It may soon be having extra food for export.

It is said that the population of Egypt is 35 million and the ratio of Christians to Muslims was 1 : 7. It is also reported that many a Muslim took into birth control for many reasons while Christians did not. Let us wait and see the results.

The following Hadith (Saying of the Prophet) bears witness of the aforementioned facts, viz., increase of Muslim population. The Hadith narrates : A man came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and told him :

"O ! Allah's Apostle, such and such a woman is very beautiful, but is infertile. Can I marry her ?"

Messenger of Allah responded, "No, don't marry her."

This was repeated twice and with the same reply.

When the Prophet was asked for the third time, he answered. "No.....marry the fertile, the beloved, because I shall be proud before all the nations because of the biggest number of Muslims (my followers)."

The Messenger of Allah did not allow the man to marry the beautiful woman to stop those who get married just for the sake of sexual entertainment. *It should not be taken that Islam does not allow marrying sterile women. Far be it. It only en-*

courages to get married to a pumpkin eater to increase the Muslim population.

Ad-Daar Qutny and At-Tabary quote from the Apostle as saying :

"Marry and do not divorce, because Allah does not like men and women who get married to taste each other or who marry for sex (love) only."

People are to marry to preserve the human species and not for enjoyment only.

Birth Control

This is one of the major evils of the Neo Jahilia. The Pre-Islamic Arabs used to kill their children for fear of want. Infanticide was common in Arabia. Even now it is not unknown in some societies because of economic reasons. To this Qur'an says :

"Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin." (17 : 31)

"Lost are those who slay their children from folly, without knowledge, and forbid food which Allah hath provided for them, inventing (lies) against Allah. They have indeed gone astray and have no guidance." (6 : 141)

"Say : Come I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from.....kill not children on a plea of want ;—We provide sus-

tenance for you and for them ;—come not nigh to shameful deeds....." (6 : 151)

Islam has forbidden infanticide, and as we have seen while discussing the status of Slavonic women, abortion was known long ago. But people did not like to use it too much because it endangers the women's life.

The Neo Jahilia not only encourages infanticide and abortion, but it has invented a fatal weapon *Birth Control* under the same pretext *Fear of Want*.

The calamity of the twentieth century Muslims is that "when one pipes somewhere, all the Muslims dance."

The average income has increased tenfold and the essentials of life have not increased so much. Why is there any fear of want, then ? I see, it comes out of luxuries. We should not forget what role advertisements could play. And that is why you find some of the merchants are prepared to invest 80% or more of the Capital on advertisement and the remaining on the commodity. This is at least so in the initial stage. But we are not children, are we ? So why, then, do we fall victims of suggestion ?

May, I remind fellow Muslims, of the above quoted saying of the Prophet : When a man asked his advice on marrying a very beautiful sterile woman, and the Messenger's answer ; No, do not marry

barren women, marry pumpkin eaters. I shall be proud before all the other nations because of the large number of my followers.

Let us consider the fertility of the Muslim¹ land, their resources, the natural enemies that surround them, and compare with their population.

Arabia ; especially Gulf States ; suffer from the lack of manpower because of its low population, you find hundreds of thousands of Sikhs, Gurkhas, Marathis, all working in the Gulf states. And yet, people practice birth control.

What we call today birth control, birth limitation or family planning, was engineered by the famous British economist Malthus some time in 1797, when he found that the population in Britain was increasing alarmingly. He thought that a time would come when there would be no sufficient place and food for such a big population. To stop the population expansion he advised his people to remain single. If they ever wanted to get married they should do so when they were advanced in age. They should try their level best to refrain sexual intercourse, lest they should get many children.

A hundred years later, in 1897, we hear Sir William Crooks ; Chairman of the British Associa-

1. It is estimated that the Muslim population as 9,00,000,000 second only to Christianity 9,25,000,000 ; divided : Africa 260,000,000, Asia 630 millions, Europe 26 millions and America and Australia 4 millions. Africa has largest percentage of Muslims : 260 millions out of the total 320 millions people of Africa.

tion, repeating in their words what Malthus had said, saying the present means compared with the ever increasing world population will not be sufficient for more than thirty years from then.

They were right in a way, as the population explosion is a tremendous thing. Let us take British as an example. The population in British jumped from 12 millions in 1797 to 38 millions in 1897 and to 52 millions in 1977 ; and yet those present have better standards of living than their ancestors had.

This took place regardless of all the necessary precautions taken. All contraceptives are available free from the National Health Service.

In France we come across Francis Palace, in the eighteenth century, advising people to use tablets and drugs to limit the birth rate. The aftermath of such steps was that France had to pay heavily during the two World Wars because of the shortage of population which affected France army. In 1975 France made all contraceptives available free for the public.

Europe learnt a very good lesson from the birth Limitations. We see them then forming National Birth Rate ; League of National Life ; Marriage Loan etc. etc.

We hear one of the war Marshalls saying after the World War, "One of the main causes of our defeat in the war was we have *Too Few Children.*"

We come across varieties of contraceptives. To name but a few, we hear of condom, pill, sterilization, intra urine device (ITD) and natural rhythm.

If you happen to ask the preachers and well-wishers of Family Planning and their itinerants they will say that voluntary sterilization¹ has become more popular as it is regarded as the contraceptive phenomena of the seventies.

In Japan condom is the most popular, while pill closely follows sterilization in the industrialised countries.

Sweden has removed all obstacles to sterilization, while Singapore legalised sterilization for consenting married couples. Indonesia mobilised village leaders to spread the programme.

Birth limitation was at full swing in India during the Emergency (from June, 1975 to March, 1977) when all democratic institutions were suspended. During that period Sanjay Gandhi, son of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, waged a war to implement sterilization. All the government servants were ordered to produce a certain number of cases for sterilization otherwise their salaries were withheld. There were no renewal of licences before the production of sterilization certificates. Any resistance was met by beating or firing. During the

1. It has become voluntary after a very wide propaganda and the use of force, sometimes.

Emergency more than 10 million people were sterilized; most of whom were Muslims.

Bruce Stokes gives us very good figures of the number of people who used contraceptives. He says that 75 million couples use sterilization around the world in contrast to the pill 55 million, the condom 50 million, the intra urine device 15 million and other contraceptives 65 million. This brings us to 240 million people who use one type of birth control or another.

One of the ills of contraceptives is that we have some deformed children who become a great burden to the society.

The preachers and well wishers of Family Planning claim that there is no room for all of us under the sun because of the population expansion and the means of livelihood are limited, forgetting that it is Allah Who has the full control of all the things. Although people use a lot of contraceptives, yet more than seventy per cent of them fail as the pill generally becomes ineffective for one reason or another. They are, then, forced to use abortion. Strange though; this is much more common with the people of the upper class in the society.

The Holy Qur'an tells us:

"And there is not a thing, but its (source and) treasures (inexhaustible) are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures."

There is no problem regarding to lack of room or place. Before us are Bahrain and Netherlands

reclaiming land. There are deserts and swarms; and because of the highly advanced technology we can utilize all these sources that nature supplied us. A very good example that comes to my mind is the Amazon Basin that could accommodate the whole population of Europe which is one of the most densely populated part of the world, giving allowance to natural phenomena such as tormented rains, insaturated and high humidity.

Coming to food we see that only 10% of the world cultivable land has been utilised for cultivation. Let us cultivate more land and make arrangements of interchange of commodity because the fertility of land differs from place to place.

Industrialization has urbanised people and made the farms in some parts to be deserted completely.

It is pointed out that people with limited income cannot meet the high standards of living and cannot give their children the best type of education they think would be suitable for them.¹

So far science has not been able to pin point which of the 220 millions or more spermatozoa will be able to penetrate into the egg cell or Ovum and which out of the 400,000 Ovarian is fully matured for fertilization.

As we all know that man inherits certain things from his ancestors. They could go back down to his seventh grandparent. We cannot say for certain

1. Abul Aala Maududi: *Harakat Tahdiid an-Nasl* (with adaptations).

whether the child is going to be a boy or girl; a genius or a moron; an invalid or a healthy one. So why risk then, let us have as many children as Allah (or call it Nature if you want so) provide us with; and give them the best education we can afford to. In that case we shall be doing a healthy thing, especially if the children are brought up with some sort of hardship. They say: vicissitudes are the salts of life. If we bring up our children with some kind of difficulty, they will be better world citizens on whom we could depend to solve many a problem, as this will help them to paddle their canoe pleasantly through thick and thin with no delinquency before showing by our youth and neither complainers when grown up.

Those who would like to know more about the subject, I would advise them to read the following literature:

1. Charles Knorotton: The Fruit of Philosophy
2. Drysdale: Law of Population
3. Paul Bureau: Towards Moral Bankruptcy.
4. Dr. Sattyawate: Family Planning
5. David M. Levy: Maternal Over-Protection
6. Freedman, Whelpton: Family Planning, Sterility and Population Growth.

They will find interesting articles about Family Planning and some of its ills. It is really worth reading them.

Why Polygamy

There are three suppositions as to the number of men to that of women in any given society from dawn of history to the present time.

1. The number of men equals to that of women.
2. The number of women surpasses that of men.
3. The number of men is more than that of women.

The first case was during the oldest times, during the time of our father Adam and our mother Eve (Hawwa). It went on up to the time of Abil (Haabiil) and Cain (Qaabiil).

Adam had one wife: Eve, and each of his children did not have more than one wife. This was the beginning of monogamy, or better still the *True Monogamy* that was ever practised. In such a society where circumstances equated the number of both the sexes. There was an equal number of men and women. It was, then, very difficult for a man to divorce his wife and marry another one. It was too risky to do something like that. He might have not been able to procure one. Women were very rare then.

The second supposition is that, there are more women than men at a certain period in a particular society, because of the standard of living they are in and the general cleanliness they have reached, or because of the calamities that had befallen them,

and in which men are much more exposed to and become easier victims than women generally are, especially in calamities of war, plague or famine. This generally applies to our present day society. Women as widows are left behind when men get killed in a war, hence it is essential to have more than one wife.

Going back to 25 years ago and rake up my brains I recollect to have read something which meant: "It is of some supernatural wisdom that men are much more exposed to dangers than women are. Had a disaster befallen the world and lost three quarters of its men, then the best solution could be to adopt and practise the Islamic Law, and marry four wives, so that the world could compensate what it had lost."

When a catastrophe falls on any society and it loses some of its male members, there normally become a lot of widows whose husbands have died because of it. Generally these widows have some children with them. It is very much difficult for an ordinary society to shoulder full responsibility over them. There should be some individual men who could maintain some of these women. Not only that, but also there is a stigma of unmarried women, who are in a badly need for the support of a man. There are many other problems which could be well done and treated had there been a religious tie between the man (supporter) and the woman (supported) i.e., *Marriage*.

This makes us recollect what German women were demanding for after the World War, II when many men died and there were a lot of widows, unmarried women and orphans. There were no sufficient men to marry them. They were raising the slogans demanding for polygamy or lent husbands.

The second supposition was and it still is the case with some of the North European countries (parts of Scandinavia), and it is also the case in Europe in general after the two World Wars. The loss in the World War I was 10 million and in the World War II it was more than 60 million.

The last and third supposition : there are more men than women in a particular society at a given time. Could such a society practise polyandry ?

But, generally speaking, will a woman, who is a real lady, agree to be the wife of more than one husband simultaneously ? Where is her honour, her prestige and respect ? Who among those many a husband, is going to be the father of the child she begets ?

It is sin in Islam to name a child after anyone else other than his natural father. Hence it forbade an adopted child to be called after the name of his adopter.

Secondly if we go very deep and analyse the composition of both man and woman, we come to the conclusion that, they differ widely in their fertility. A woman can beget one child only in one

year; while a man can have more than that number. This is true in all male living things : One male date palm can pollinate tens of female date palm ; one bull ; by means of artificial insemination or through natural means ; can inseminate tens of cows etc. etc.

There is an uproar today with the people demanding equal rights for women as those for man.

Let us take very simple examples of the things that are agreed to be feminist, and are more or less done by women as part of their duty. Those things are : cooking, embroidery, knitting, sewing, cosmetics, mourning, entertainment, joking, and laughter."

We find a male cook surpassing a female one in quick and good service, in quality of the food, in inventing new varieties or ways of cooking etc. etc.

In cosmetics, all the women who attend beauty parlours prefer their hair be done by male dressers rather than by female ones, because men have a better know-how of hair, thinning or eye pencilling. The same thing applies to the make ups taken by actors and actresses in theatre or stage.

Male singers and dancers have better performance than female ones.

"Women generally prefer to have their dress made by male tailors and outfitters rather than by seamstresses."¹

1. Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqaad : *al-Mar'a fil Qur'an* with adaptations.

So, why then, do we stop men to utilise their natural instincts of procreation telling them to practise polyandry. Man is a reasonable creature who can use his gifts by diverting the outlet of his energies.

Personally, I do not remember to have heard of any society where there had been or have been more men than women. I would like to know.

One might tend to think that in the Gulf States there are less women than men, as the younger generation tend to go to Iran, India, Pakistan or Egypt and now to East Africa to find wives and get married there. It is not because of the shortage of women in this area, as there are people with up to four wives. Just in the village where I am writing these lines there are 80/100 houses and huts. I know ten people from the village with more than one wife each. The younger generation tend to marry abroad for some reasons: Dowry is too high in the area and many girls are not well accomplished, and because of a change.

Even though, and regardless of whether there could be a society where there are more men than women, there is a clear cut evidence that women generally get married at a much earlier age than men do. Riding the chariot of history and going back to times immemorial we find the similar case. Just because girls get matured 2 to 6 years earlier before boys.

So in this case Islam would advise such a society where there are more men than women; to

practise monogamy and young men who cannot find wives for themselves are to observe fasting, because fasting, and not *sublimation* is the best remedy for sexual urges. *Fasting* should be in its true Islamic sense.

The Messenger of Allah is quoted as saying "O ye young men, anyone of you who can afford marrying should get married. If some of you cannot afford marrying (for some reasons): then they should observe fasting....."

Fasting distracts the eyes from looking at the forbidden (the other sex) and protects the one who fasts from committing any illegal sexual intercourse.

Natural Differences

It is unanimously agreed that in every hundred adults, we got the ratio of at least 52 women to 48 men. Sometimes the number of women surpasses that of men.

Suppose every man in such a society gets married to a woman. We still find four unmarried women out of hundred people. Multiply this population wise; we get an incredible number of unmarried women. The unmarried women form 4% of the population. What is the society to do when it is on the horns of such dilemma? These unmarried women might get all the necessities of life and luxury that could be available then, but they miss one important thing: *Husband*.

*do they need a husband?
what about want?*

what?!!?
what about lesbians! Those who choose to be single!
 To a woman marriage is all her vocation in life, whether she is a doctor, teacher etc., no matter how excellent she is at her work yet her sub-conscious aim is that of having a family of her own shared by a good man, who is the father of her children.

Mothers always think of their daughters being married to the best husbands possible. Reading literature you come across a lot of such examples. Among the best English writers on this topic are: The Aroutees and Jane Austin. Let's read the opening chapter of *Pride and Prejudice*:

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."

Tracy, you twist
 "However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters."

"My dear Mr. Bennett; said his lady to him one day, have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?"

"Why, my dear, you must know Mr. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune....."

"Is he married or single?"

"Oh! single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!"

"My dear.....you must know that I am thinking of marrying one of them."

Marriage means quiet of mind, rest, security, independent home, bringing up children and countless

other things. That is why our present day life is full of young men who deceive naive girls by telling them that they are going to marry them. Our young girls take such words as a promise. They generally sacrifice the best thing that a girl could possess, honour and chastity, at the altar of the promised marriage. And when the young men get what they need they run away from those poor girls under many pretexts. This is one of the follies of Neo Jahilia. Oh! those poor girls. They must be more precautions, as they say: Once bitten, twice shy.

Moreover, the period of fertility in men goes up to an average age of seventy, while in women it stops at the age of 45/50. There is a difference of at least twenty years of fertility in men which is not found in women.

The Apostle of Allah urged Muslims to marry fertile women, so as to increase Muslim population, as it was suggested before.

So polygamy provided very good opportunity to fertile men whose wives can no more give birth to children.

Furthermore, the wife could be sick (she could not satisfy her husband for one reason or another) or she might be sterile.

If both of them go for a medical check up and the results show that only one of the couple is barren, while the other is fertile. They discuss their problem and come to a conclusion: either accepting their star as it is and live together without thinking

of children or separation. It is too early to depend on tube babies.

In such a case Islam has looked into the humanitarian side of the wife. Suppose she is barren and divorced. Then the possibilities of her being married by someone else after people knowing her case are almost nil.

It will be much more logical if a rival is there, and she retains all her marital rights, rather than her being sacked to the streets.

A wife is to answer to the call of her husband whenever he calls her to bed, even though she were fasting an optional (Nafil) fast. The only times Islam does not require her to answer to his call are when she is during her forty days of confinement after child bearing, during menstruation period and when she is observing a mandatory (fard) fast mostly.

Suppose a woman is married to a virile husband and she is either in her parturition or menstruation and husband calls her. He wants to see his wife several times daily. What is such a husband going to do? Is he to sleep with his wife under such condition or is he to commit adultery? Each of the two evils is worse than the other.

If we go very deep into the meaning of the Qur'anic verse that permits polygamy, we shall find something amazing: The same verse categorically restricts it: Let us read the verse thoroughly:

".....If ye fear ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice: two, three or four; but if ye fear that

ye shall not be able to *deal justly* with them, then marry only one, or a captive that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable to prevent you from doing injustice....."

(Qur'an 4 : 3)

One would ask, 'Is there any connection between the treating of orphans and marrying several wives, as both are mentioned together?'

The answer is a positive Yes.

When Muslims were told before not to earn or spend the property of the orphans, they became much afraid of any other reprimand. They, then, refrained from doing injustice to the orphans and were very careful in their dealings with them, yet, they were not afraid of doing injustice to all or some of their wives.

There is another reason. We are told that 'Urwa bi Zubair asked Hadrat 'Aisha bint Abu Bakr the true meaning of the verse. Hazrat 'Aisha said "O! cousin, an orphan girl would be brought up by her guardian who might be attracted by either her beauty or wealth. He would marry her and would not treat her justly. This verse forbids such a treatment."

Generally if the guardian did not want to marry her, he might give one of his relative to marry her and it always happened without the girl's consent.

Man is required to deal justly with his wives in all matters within his limits, mainly in matter pertaining to *maintenance* in all its aspects. He is to divide the time he spends between his wives

equally well, especially his nights. He is to buy them things, food and clothes of the same quality.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was on his death bed ; he was carried to all his wives' rooms in turn. And when he was seriously ill, he asked all his wives to allow him to remain at 'Aisha for treatment. They all agreed and after a few days he left this moving world of ours.

Such a man who was dealing with his wives in such a way even on his death bed, yet he felt that there was something wrong, *Love*. He could not divide his love equally between them as it was something far beyond human control. He is quoted as saying :

"Allah ! Almighty ! This is my share to my wives in all what is under my control and ability. Forgive me O Lord and don't blame me on what You are in control, and I cannot control or do anything about it."

The Prophet's saying could be a true interpretation of the verse which some people misunderstand.

"Ye will not be able to deal equally between (your) wives, however much ye wish (to do so). But turn not altogether away (from one) leaving her in suspense " (Qur'an 4 : 129)

The gist of the verse is : deal with your wives justly, try your utmost and leave the rest to Allah.

Islam Arranged Polygamy

When Islam came into being polygamy was there in varying degrees in different parts of the

universe in all the diversity of cultures as we have just seen. Polygamy was practised by the Jews, Christians, Budhists, Brahmans, Pre-Islamic Arabs. I have not been able to get hold of materials about Zoroastrian, Confucious, nor the teachings of Guru Nanak¹ so I cannot say anything about them.

We cannot label Islam and say it created polygamy as some Non-Muslims tend to say. Allah forbid. All that Islam did about polygamy was to organise it and restrict it to *four wives* under strict rule of *justice*.

A Muslim can have up to four wives and as many concubines as he could possess in addition to his four wives.

Here I would like to point out one important thing. There were and still are and will be people who misuse what is given them. In that case it is wrong to blame the authority or the giver, but we are to blame the person who misuses what he is given.

There was a time when people used to enslave others and sold them. This state of affairs was the rule of the time, and it went on up to the nineteenth century of the Christian Era. This is completely contrary to the teachings of Islam, as there was no Jihād (Holy religious war between Muslims and non-Muslims for the good of humanity). Only the

1. Nanak came long after Islam during the last days of the Moghals in Punjab. His followers now live mainly in Punjab (Indian part) and are known as Sikhs.

captives of the true Jihād are to be treated as concubines.

A female slave once taken by her master as a wife she is given back some of her human rights. When she begets a child she automatically becomes free after the death of her master.

A slave wife is much better off than her contemporary ordinary household slaves. She is one of the wives of the master. She by now, has some say in the affairs of the house.

Moreover, she answers the woman nature's call (Husband-wife) in the legal way. She never sublimates it or runs with this or that person, and sells her prestige and honour.

5

Prophet Married Nine Wives

Reasons for His Marrying Nine Wives

It has been the topic of some people to criticize or comment on the number of wives the Prophet had. Philip Hitti in his book : *History of the Arabs* puts them as a dozen wives. Some even say more.

Oh ! the Holy Messenger of Allah, may I ask your permission to explain briefly about the Mothers of Muslims ?

There are the enemies of Islam who say that the Prophet married all those wives for his own personal interest and to satisfy his wish, and it was he who encouraged polygamy.

Now, nobody has ever mentioned or suspected the Prophet of any illegal contact with any woman (Allah forbid) from his childhood till he left this world at the age of 63 years.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) did not marry all those wives for purely a happy and

peaceful married life, but there were reasons why he did so.

His first marriage was at the age of 25 years with Khadija who was more than 40 years of age, i.e., there was a difference of more than 15 years. Why did he not marry one of the young, beautiful Quraishy girls? There was no girl who could be asked her hand by Muhammad and refused.

The couple—the Apostle and Khadija had the best, happiest and the most perfect family life that could ever be dreamt of. The two of them stayed together till when he was fifty and she was more than 66 that she passed away quietly after giving birth to al-Qaasim; Zaynab; Ruqaiyya; Ummu Kulthūm, Fatima and ‘Abd-Allah.

During all this time—25 years—the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) did not think of marrying another wife though it was permissible and there was nothing wrong about it. Everybody did it.

Only after Khadija's death and when he was 50 years of age, did the Messenger of Allah think of marrying other wives.

His first wife after the death of Hadrat Khadija was Hadrat Sawda bint Zam‘ah, who was too old to have a husband, and who, as we have seen before; gave up her share of nights to Hadrat ‘Aisha.

To have better ties with the supports and vanguard of Islam he decided to marry ‘Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr (the first Caliph after his death, and the best companion). She was the

youngest of his wives. It is said that she was nine¹ years of age when he married her. ‘Aisha related many sayings. This could also be another reason, as to remember them, especially those concerning women.

Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) married Hadrat Hafsa, the daughter of Hadrat ‘Umar bin Al-Khattaab, whose husband had died. Her father, Hadrat ‘Umar asked Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat ‘Uthman to marry her. They both refused. He then went to the Prophet and told him about his grievance. The Prophet, then married Hadrat Hafsa.

He then married Hadrat Zaynab bint Khuzayma, whose husband had died in the battle of Uhud. None among the Muslims ever asked her hand. Then the Prophet married her to heal her wounded heart. She died two months after the marriage.

Then he married Hadrat Umme Salama, Hind bint Abi Umayya Hudhaifa bin Mughira al-Makhzumi, whose husband Abdulla al-Makhzumi had also died in the battle of Uhud. When Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat ‘Umar separately asked her hand, she refused because of her age. She was no longer in the marriageable age. After the repeated requests of the Prophet she finally accepted him.

1. We should remember that this took place 1,400 years ago and at the desert of Arabia, where girls mature at an early age. We should not compare it with 20th Century Europe.

The Prophet was ordered to marry Zainab bint Jahash ; who was his near relative, and who had been married to Zayd bin Hāritha. Qur'an says :

"And it becometh not a believing man or a believing woman, who Allah and His Messenger have decided an affair (for them) that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair, and who so is rebellious to Allah and His Messenger, he verily goeth astray in error manifest."

"And when thou saidst unto him on whom Allah hath conferred favour and thou hast conferred favour : *Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear Allah. And thou didst hide in thy mind that which Allah was to bring to light*, and thou didst fear mankind whereas Allah had a better right that thou shouldst fear him. So when Zayd had performed the necessary formality (of divorce) from her, we gave her unto thee in marriage, so that (henceforth) there may be no sin for believers in respect of wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have performed the necessary formality (of release) from them. The commandment of Allah must be fulfilled."

(Qur'an : 33 : 36 & 37)

This incidence was to break two Pre-Islamic customs : (a) A freed man (Zayd) to marry a free lady (Zainab) and (b) the adopter father (The Prophet) was to marry the ex-wife (Zainab) of his adopted son (Zayd), so he married Zainab bint Jahash, after her being divorced by Zayd bin Hāritha, to break

the old habit of treating adopted sons as their own sons.

Then he married Hadrat Umme Habiba Ramla bint Abi Sufyan b. Harb ; the daughter of the leader of Quraish who led the opposition for a decade or more. She migrated to Abyssinia with her husband, where he embraced Christianity.

She embraced Islam against the wish of all her people even that of her father. Had she gone back to her family they would force her to be an unbeliever.

She had migrated to Abyssinia with her husband, leaving everything behind her. Her husband died. She had no one to look after her and had nowhere to go. She could not go back to her parents. She was an outcaste in his family as she was a Muslim. The Messenger of Allah married her to heal her wounds and then she became one of the Mothers of the Muslims.

Safiyya bint Hubay ; the daughter of the ruler of the Jews ; was one of the slaves of the war that was fought between the Muslims and the Jews. The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) married her to compensate her something of what she had lost.

After the battle of Bani al-Mustaliq and their defeat, they were about to be treated under foot. No sooner had the Prophet married Juwayriyya bint al-Haarith, the daughter of the chief of the clan, Bani al-Mustaliq regained their dignity and freedom.

He married Marya bint Sham'uun al-Qibtiyya (Mary) the former Coptic slave girl, who was given to him as a present by Cyrus (al-Muqawqis). He married her because she embraced Islam and she had no relatives in Arabia. Marya gave birth to Ibrahim; Prophet's seventh child; who died in infancy.

The Prophet then married his freed female slave, Rayhana bint Zayd, after her embracing Islam.

Finally he married Maymunna bint al-Harith al-Hilaaliya, who was his last wife before the revelation of the verses 50-52 of the Sura 33 of the Holy Qur'an.

(O ! Prophet of Allah ! Allah and you only know the actual reasons of your marrying all those wives. This is just an attempt in accordance with my limited knowledge of the supernatural philosophy behind it.)

We come to know that Prophet Muhammad practised monogamy from his twenties; then he married his only wife and who was older than him for more than 15 years, till his fifties when she expired. Only then did he marry nine wives; Sawda bint Zam'a; 'Aisha bint Aba Bakr; Hafsa bint 'Umar; Ummi Salama; Zaynab bint Jahash, Umme Habiba bint Abi Sufyaan; Safiyya bint Hubay; Juwayriyya bint al-Haritha and Marya al-Qibtiyya (Mary the Copt).

He married all these nine wives when he was in his fifties, and all his wives but one was not old,

some had very big sons and daughters long before he married them. Many of his wives were too old for any married relations, as we have seen in the case of Sawda bint Zam'a. His only young wife was 'Aisha. She was only about sixteen years when he expired.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) became polygamous after the age of fifty because of many reasons some of them could be social and political ones.

Why did He Marry Nine and His Followers only Four

When the Prophet died, he left nine widows, and no one among his followers had more than four wives as he had told them to choose any four wives and divorce the rest. Is this fair and just?

Yes it is.

The Messenger of Allah (SAW) did not have a good time with women at the prime of his youth when everything was at his advantage. Do you expect such a person to start enjoying himself with old women in his fifties?

He had nine wives who were demanding for better conditions of life. They were all tired of spending days on an end without kindling a fire in their kitchen. They used to remain without food; and when they had, they never had enough. None of them was used to such a life before she came to him. It was a completely strange and new life for them.

to "save" the 9, he married them

★ The Prophet had a mission and he longed to fulfil it; *Propagation and Spread of Islam*. He used all the legal means at his disposal to reach that goal.

The wives asked for some improvement in the way they were living from such a man who was told :

“And strain not thine eyes towards that which we cause some wedded pairs among them to enjoy, the flower of the life of the world, that we may try them thereby. The provision of thy Lord is better and more lasting.”

“And enjoining upon thy people worship, and be constant therein, and be sequel for righteousness.” (Qur'an 20 : 131 & 132)

They asked for better living from a man whose ideal in life was :

“That which is little and sufficient is better than what is in abundance and diverting.”

The petition for better conditions was engineered by all his wives and then headed by 'Aisha and Hafsa.¹

The Prophet (peace be upon him) became very disheartened because of this phenomena. He was the first Muslim in the Globe, and the eyes of all Muslims everywhere were looking at him. He was to build a nation in the midst of countless enemies.

1. Muhammad al-Ghazaaliy : *Fiqh as-Sirah* : Mataabi' : Ali bin Ali : Qatar : Doha.

What was the Apostle of Allah to do ? Was he to change the way of his living and live a luxurious life ? Had he done so, would he then be able to combat and struggle for the propagation of Islam ? Would luxury give him time for such a struggle ?

Not only did he then reject all the demands of his wives, but also boycotted them. The boycott made his companions think he was going to divorce all of them.

Abu Bakr and 'Umar intervened. They went to the Messenger of Allah and found him fasting surrounded by all his wives who were very sad. 'Umar asked him : “O ! Messenger of Allah ! Are you going to divorce your wives ?”

He responded : “NO.”

Both Abu Bakr and 'Umar said to their daughters : 'Aisha and Hafsa : “Why do you demand from the Prophet what he did not own.”

This state of affairs went on for nearly a month during which time verses were revealed giving the wives a choice : Whether cling to Allah and His Messenger and forsake all worldly matters or, be divorced and rejoin their parents where they could find what they had demanded for in abundance. They all, without an exception, accepted *Allah and His Apostle*. To this the Holy Qur'an says :

“O Prophet ! say unto thy wives : If ye desire the world's life and its adornment, come ! I will content you and release you with a fair release.”

"But if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, then lo! Allah hath prepared for the good among you an immense reward" (Qur'an 33 : 28 & 29)

All his wives unanimously gave themselves up and sacrificed all the worldly matters for the sake of Allah and his Apostle and the Hereafter. Allah then raised their status very high. Instead of their being wives of a man from whom they demanded more luxury, they became *Mothers of the Muslims*. To this respect Qur'an says :

"The Prophet is closer to the believers than their selves, and his wives are (as) their mothers." (Qur'an 33 : 6)

"O ye wives of the Prophet ! Ye are not like any other women. If ye keep your duty (to Allah) then be not soft of speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease aspire (you), but utter customary speech."

"And stay in your houses. Bedizen not yourselves with the bedizenment of the time of Ignorance. Be regular in prayer, and pay the poor due, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah's wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you ; O Folk of the House-hold, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing."

"And bear in mind that which is recited in your houses of the revelations of Allah and wisdom....."

(Qur'an 33 : 32, 33 & 34)

After such a sacrifice of all worldly matters for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, it was not then becoming to divorce some and retain others. Who were to be divorced among the wives and who were to be retained ? It was very difficult to decide because of the mutual agreement between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his wives of staying with him under whatsoever the circumstances that might have come. He was permitted to retain all his wives ; while his companions (and all Muslims later on) had to divorce some of their wives and had to retain not more than four at a time. Concerning this Qur'an says :

"O Prophet'. Lo ! We have made lawful unto thee thy wives unto whom thou hast paid their dowries, and those who thy right hand possessest , and a believing woman if she gives herself unto the Prophet and the Prophet desire to ask her in marriage—a *privilege for thee only*, not for the (rest of) believers—We are aware of that which We enjoined upon them concerning their wives.....that thou mayst be free from blame"

"Thou canst defer whom thou wilt of them and receive unto thee whom thou wilt, and whomever thou desirest of those whom thou hast set aside (temporarily) ; it is sin for thee (to receive her again) ; that is better, that they may be comforted and not grieve, and may Allah be pleased with what thou givest them"

"It is not allowed thee to take (other) women henceforth, nor that thou shouldst change them for other wives"

(Qur'an 33 : 50, 51 & 52)

As we have just seen from the aforementioned factors that when the wives of the Prophet asked for better conditions of living, he gave them a choice ; to be divorced and go back to their parents where there were things in plenty or to accept Allah and His Messenger as the Messenger was then. The wives unanimously agreed to remain ever under worse conditions.

So when the ruling of limiting wives to only four at a time was revealed, it would have been inhuman had it included the nine wives of the Prophet.

The stroke of the act of humanity could not be regarded as lust in connection with the Prophet (peace be upon him). God forbid. Far be with it.

Those who think like that are either ignorant of the fact or have been influenced by the Neo Jahilia.

O Messenger of Allah, this my endeavour to bring home the reasons, according to my little knowledge, of your marrying so many wives. I beg your pardon if I have written irrelevant information.

Chaste Woman :

Islam Protects Her

Islam protects the honour of people and their affinity, and that is why it limits the sexual urge. It does not give reins to the passion, nor does Islam mortify it. Islam does not allow people to become like beasts satisfying their lust moving from one person to another. It controls the sex urge under certain rules.

Man is the most superior creature on earth so he should have his own identity. He must control his sexual desire. Has he ever noticed some species of animals and birds that would never allow male intruders go to their females. They would chase any male intruder and fight with him. So why does he allow himself to be much inferior than those animals ? Look at male lions and male crows as best examples.

If we really follow the teachings of Islam, we shall never find in our society any complexes such as the Id, libido or Oedipus complexes.

Islam forbids all such things as might arouse

sexual urge in one way or another.

Islam has raised a woman from the swamps she was ; and in the Neo Jahilia she still is ; to the highest ranks, while the Neo Jahilia utilizes her innocence and beauty as to exhibit her at the counter of every big store house and trade place to attract vendors ; or she becomes the private secretary of the big Boss, and it is interesting to note that a beautiful young naive girl quickly becomes the private secretary of the boss. Allah knows what are the results of the *Privacy* and *Secrecy*.

To stop people from many rumour and doubts about them, Islam has a clear cut remedy. It forbids privacy between a man and a woman. If the nature of the work makes a woman go in and out of the office of the boss, then the door must be kept wide open when she is with him. It should be kept ajar.

Islam has taught her which parts of her body are to be seen by *Ajaanib* (singular Ajnabi—non-Mahram i.e. a man who can marry her legally if she is not married to anyone else) ; and what parts can be seen by Mahaarim (singular Mahram non-Ajnabi i.e. a man who can never lawfully marry her, because of consanguinity as father, uncle etc. The coming verse will mention them all) ; and husband is advised not to look at the sex organ of his wife as he might see something that lest he should hate her. To this Qur'an says :

"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of

their adornment only that which is apparent and to draw their veils over their bossoms, and not to reveal their adornment save their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons, their husbands' sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn to Allah"

(Quran 24 : 31).

(All the males mentioned in this verse with the exception of slaves, children and attendants ; are regarded as Mahārim (Sing. Mahram mentioned before).

Islam has taught woman how to talk to ajnabi (a stranger—a non-Mahram) directly (although it does not much encourage the way of her talking to man face to face). Islam taught her also to talk with him behind the curtain (and this way is much more preferable).

When a woman talks to an ajnabi, her voice should not be soft or have certain tone that could arouse sexual urge in whose heart is a disease.

Islam has told woman not to bedizen herself and not to show her pudendum.¹ She is to practise

1. A Muslim woman's private parts are all her body with the exception of her palms and feet. There are two schools of thought about her face.

to the woman's job
to not look too proud
at such a way as to

a strict pudency before all ajaanib (strangers). They should never see any part of her body except her palms and feet, while she may show her face as well according to some Muslim scholars.

The dress, a Muslim woman is allowed to wear, should cover the whole body—with the exception of hands and face. (2) Should be loose enough so as not to show what she is covering. (3) Should be so thick that it does not describe the colour of the skin of the parts covered. (4) Should not attract man's attention or designed for show. (5) Should not be similar to male costume. (6) Should not be similar to the dress of unbelievers (kuffār) and (7) Should not be a dress of fame or pride.

No Sex Excitement Aroused

Prevention is better than cure, goes parallel with the sound and healthy policy of Islam.

Islam does not depend on punishment to build up its society, it tries to keep the society free from distractors. It does not combat the natural instincts; it arranges them and guides them to the proper channels. Islam prepares an appropriate and clean atmosphere, with no artificial stimulants. Under such an atmosphere the human desires develop naturally without any hindrance.

In the true Islamic religious curricula all the opportunities of going astray must be eliminated or at least minimized, and the means of sexual attractions must be removed. There should be no

hindrance from natural sexual satisfaction through legal means.

Islam asked both man and woman to lower their gaze, and told the woman not to reveal her adornment, lest the one in whose heart is a disease is affected.

Sayyid Qutub in his book : *Fi Dhilālil Qur'an* (Under the shades of Qur'an) has the following to say (with slight adaptations) :

"No clean Muslim society will ever exist if sexual instincts are aroused every now and then and human flesh is exhibited all the time. This continued act of arousing sex urge leads to the kindling of sex fires that will never be extinguished."

"The sexy look, the stimulating act, the nude, the bedizenment etc. etc. all those lead to no more than making that fire kindle more and more till one can no longer control oneself. The consequences are anarchy and there will be no morale that control people. People have either to satisfy their sex urge and enjoy themselves to the brim, or there is frustration, neurotic cases, and a hundred and one complexes because of the inhibition after the sex drives were aroused. This is not less than a kind of torture."

"One of the means of Islam in building up a clean society is to stop such sexual excitement from happening and to preserve the deep natural

desires between the two sexes and to remain safe and sound with its natural strength without any artificial excitement and to guide it to its proper, safe and clean place.

"When people live with no morals, then the following things become common and ordinary things : a greedy gaze at the other sex, when the two sexes meet, each of them gives reins in his talk to the other sex, mixing up and commingling of the two sexes and some sort of privacy between a male and a female, lovely jesting between them, looking and touching parts of the body and these and even more become things that are taken for granted. Just because those who practise them and advertise them have a strong belief that this is the only solution, because in their opinion it prevents inhibition and it stops creation of complexes, and it reduces the pressure and its repercussions (They are like the drowned man who clutches at a straw)."

Man is the vicegerent of Allah on the earth from the day Allah created our father Adam till when Allah inherits the Universe and who and what are on and in it.

Allah has created a natural attraction between the two sexes : One sex is unconsciously attracted to the other. This natural attraction fluctuates from time to time.

Once such natural attraction is attractively exposed to artificial excitement, it certainly be

perturbed and it will need satisfaction no matter whatever the cost. Otherwise the excited parts get tired and in the long run one might get psychological problems or nervous breakdown. What

The means of the sexual excitement are many but the main ones are : a gaze, bedizenment, certain actions and motions, smile and laughter, flirtation and effeminate way of talk (voice).

Islam requires from its adherents to at least minimize, if not eliminate, these distractors for the common good of the society at large.

We are to strive in finding ways and means of legal and natural satisfaction of our sex urge.

There were times when people used to interpret everything as sexy. Even when they found a child suckling its fingers, they would say it depicts its sex behaviour. Have they ever thought that the world is full of things other than sex? Soachly

When this ideology had a widespread, we found many a writer following the same line : whatever they wrote was sex centred.¹ That was one of the reasons of beginning the downfall of our morals.

Women Respect

Islam interdicts a man from derogating a woman. He is to respect her and help her honour herself. If he detracts her, he is to be punished here in the world first, and then there where neither

1. Sex psychology was later attacked.

wealth nor children will be of any avail or help, save only those who came to Allah with sound hearts.

Man is to lower his gaze before a woman and she is to lower hers as well. He is not to look at her with his purposeful continued gaze. The first unintentional glance, there is nothing in it, but not the succeeding ones with evil purpose. They are sinful.

Freedom with Limits

Islam has given people freedom with certain precautions and limits. It did not let them do whatsoever they liked. That would mean anarchy. People are not to transgress those limits, so that the human society could produce the expected natural products.

The following rights go side by side with the respected freedom : the right of property, the right of honour and respect, the right of marriage, the right of affinity, and the right of society.

Islam has taken much pains to arrange the problem of commingling between man and woman and tried to strike a balance betwixt the twain : positive and negative so that neither is to transgress the other or overpower it. This is where the principles of Islamic education must completely differ from other ideologies in education.¹ Islamic society must have its own standards, peculiarities

1. Unfortunately many Islamic Curricula divert from the goal to Pragmatism, Idealism etc. etc.

and identity. It should learn good things from the others and choose what do not contravene with Islam.

Practise what you preach is a good maxim. Take an example of education. Some people send their daughters to mixed schools. When those girls grow up and prohibited from mingling with men. What a contradictory way of dealing with things ?

In any good Muslim society there should be no co-education under whatever pretext. School boys, big or small, should under no circumstances ever mix with girls.

One might raise the following question, "Look here !" You said that women were taking part in different walks of life during the life of the Prophet and even during the early Caliphate. Why, then, do you say that she is not to mingle with men now ? It is a new approach to Islam or what is it all about ?

My answer to him is, "Yes, she was actually taking an active part in building up the Muslim society, and nobody can ever stop her from exercising her right to do so at any epoch of time, provided she follows strictly the teachings of Islam ; she should never adorn herself before any ajnabi (stranger), she must wear the apparel covering all her body with the exception of hands, feet and (some scholars say) face as well. She should never wear tight, thin and transparent clothes. She ought always to wear underclothing. She is never to imitate men in their clothing.

"She must be upright in her walk, there should never be a swing song way of walk. She must never do anything that might tempt or attract people. She ought to be *shy* as shyness is the best cloth for a Muslim chaste woman to put on."

"There should never be a Khalwa" (privacy between a man and a woman i.e., comingling between the two sexes)."

A Whisper to Man and Woman

May I whisper to the ear of my sister in Islam that it is haraam (unlawful) in Islam for a Muslim woman to wear clothes that make her body become conspicuous. There is a Prophet (peace be upon him) saying which means: Two types of the people of the Hell I have not yet seen them (but are coming): People with whips just like the tails of cows with which they beat others (dictators and tyrants); and women dressed but naked (because their apparel expose their breasts, chests, necks, thighs etc. etc.) they are going astray (from the right path). They are misleading their followers and in whose hearts is a disease. Their heads (have become) as big as the humps of the biggest camels (their heads become so lofty because of the artificial hair-wig or anything else, and because of the new way of dressing the hair at coufeir or at a beauty parlour). They will never enter Paradise.....

2. No Muslim virtuous woman is to wear man's dress or imitate him in his manly way of talk or walk. She should never try to make herself a man.

She is not to be an Amazon. A man should never put on woman's dress or copy her in any feminine way. He must not effeminate himself. He is not to be a Sissy boy.

It is narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed the Sissies and the Amazons and told people to drive them out of their houses. He also cursed men who wear clothes like women and women who put on apparel like men.

3. It is sinful to tattoo one's skin, sharpening teeth, and parting them (so as to have gaps in between) and joining the natural hair with any artificial hair (e.g., wig) but not plait.

The Messenger of Allah cursed the following:

"The tattooer (doer) of the skin and the tattooed (the one done); the sharpener and shortener (doer) and whose teeth are sharpened or shortened; the parter of teeth and the one whose teeth are parted; the joiner of hair to the original one and to whose hair is joined new one; the thinner and penciler of the eyebrows and that whose eyebrows are thinned or pencilled; and the shortener of the hair at the forehead and whose hair is shortened."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed all of them; the one who does any of the aforementioned things to others and those on whom such things are done.

Anyone who wants such things to be done unto him, suffers a lot of pain unnecessarily. He wastes

his time and money on luxury, instead of spending it on essential things. He tries to change his features, those features that were created by the All-Knowing Creator of the Universe. By doing so, he is as if telling Allah: "Look here! You are wrong. You created me in this form. I am going to change myself to the way I like" (Allah Forbid). On and above all this, he is cursed by the Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

It is said that Mu'aawiya was once talking to people on a pulpit at Medina and had a lock of hair in his hand. He told them: "Where are your 'Ulama'a (religious scholars). You join hair (before their eyes and they never do anything about it or reprimand you)? The Prophet forbade Muslims from using it as it is regarded as a counterfeit, because deceives people and makes them think that it is the original hair of the person, while it is not. The Israelites (Jews) perished when their wives took to wig."

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah prohibited Muslim from doing the following:

"Tattoo of the skin; sharpening; shortening and parting of the teeth; cutting short of forehead hair; a man should never be bed-fellow to another man without clothes on; no woman is to be a bed-fellow with another woman with no apparel on; no man is to use silk (even) as underclothing or on his shoulders (more than four inches wide) as the non-Muslims do; there must be no looting, no man is to ride on a tiger

back (a symbol of pride); no man is to wear a gold ring (only those in power may do so).

It is one of the ills of Neo Jahilia, that Muslim women go to beauty parlours and they prefer that massaging and their hair be done by men and not by women. Dear sisters have you forgotten that hair is among the taboo. It should never be seen by an ajnabi (a man who can legally marry her), let alone be touched by him?

There were times when thinning and pencilling of the eyebrows was done by prostitutes only. No chaste woman ever thought of it.

Well; sister in Islam; thank you very much for attentive listening to my whisper.

Now, may I ask my brothers in Islam to join hands with me and help our sister fulfil the teachings of her religion? Do you promise me that? Thank you so much. May Allah bless us and help us in our new task.

Zinaa—Adultery and Fornication

During my reading of the Bible I came across a very interesting article about adultery. It is as follows, after telling him to follow his parents instructions the article goes on:

"It can keep you away from bad women, from the seductive words of other man's wives. Do not be tempted by their beauty; don't be tempted by their flirting eyes. A man can hire a prostitute for the price of a loaf of bread, but

adultery will cost him all he has. Can you carry fire against your chest without burning your clothes? Can you walk on hot coals without burning your feet? It is just as dangerous to sleep with another man's wife But a man who commits adultery hasn't any sense. He is just destroying himself. He will be dishonoured and beaten up, he will be permanently disgraced” (Proverbs 6 : 24 to 29 & 32 & 33)

We read the following from the Old Testament:

“If a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, he must pay the bride-price for her and marry her. But if the father refuses to let him marry her, he must pay the father a sum of money equal to the bride price for a virgin.” (Exodus 22 : 16, 17)

“The Lord gave the following regulations. Do not have sexual intercourse with any of your relatives. Do not disgrace your father by having intercourse with mother. Do not disgrace your father by having intercourse with any of his wives. Do not have intercourse with your sister or your step-sister, whether or not she was brought up in the same house with you. Do not have intercourse with your grand-daughter that will be a disgrace to you. Do not have intercourse with your aunt, whether she is your father's sister or your mother's sister. Do not have intercourse with your uncle's wife. She is too, your aunt. Do not have intercourse with

your daughter-in-law or with your brother's wife. Do not have intercourse with the daughter or grand-daughter of a woman with whom you had intercourse, they may be related to you, and that would be incest. Do not take your wife's sister as one of your wives, as long as your wife is living. Do not have intercourse with a woman during her monthly period Do not have intercourse with another man's wife (Leviticus 18 : 6/20)

“Do not commit adultery” (Exodus 19 : 20)¹

To protect the chaste woman and the family from any bad reputation, Islam is very strict about adultery and fornication. Islam regards anyone who commits Zinaa (adultery or fornication) as far from Islam the time he/she commits it.

Sexual intercourse in Islam is not a mere temporary satisfaction. It is the continuation of human life and human reproduction. Man being Allah's vicegerent on the earth, he is duty bound to build the world and develop it to the best of his advantage, he is to increase his number in multitude. Man (male and female) cannot fulfil any of these if he only satisfies his sex urge from one human body to another. Neither will he be able to build up a very good, healthy, problem free society.

Prostitution is the most serious disease in any society. The first thing a strumpet does is to discard

1. Good News Bible : Courtesy : Bible Society.

her feminism, her humanity, morale and even manner, otherwise she will not make a good whore.

An adulteress (or fornicatress) causes a lot of social ills; to mention but a few examples: the affinity of the progeny is doubtful and becomes mixed (in Islam the child *must* be called after the name of his real father); she creates some sort of hatred between the parties concerned. The family tie of an adulteress is at a stake; while the fornicatress seldom thinks of having a family. To this Qur'an says:

"The woman and the man guilty of *Zinaa* (adultery and fornication) flog each of them a hundred stripes. Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah if ye believe in Allah and the Last Day and let a party of believers witness their punishments."

(Qur'an 24:2)

The Arabic word *Zinaa*: means sexual intercourse between a man and woman not married to each other. The English word *Adultery* applies to a married man or woman making love (sexual intercourse) with one who is not the legal husband or wife; while fornication means that both parties are unmarried. *Zinaa* means both, adultery and fornication.

Flogging a hundred stripes is applied to fornicators (unmarried committers of the act) whether one of the parties or both of them are unmarried. The unmarried is to be flogged a hundred stripes.

Those who commit adultery (married ones) are to be stoned till death.

If one of the parties is married while the other is unmarried; then the married member is to be stoned, and the unmarried one be flogged.

When either of the punishment takes place, there must be a party of Muslims witnessing, so that it may serve as a lesson to them and it could make the wrong doers feel it much more painful.

If those who committed fornication do not repent, then they are not allowed to marry chaste people and believers. They are to marry people of their like (unchaste) or unbelievers. Qur'an has the following to say about this:

"Let no man guilty of adultery¹ or fornication marry any but a woman similarly guilty, or an unbeliever, nor let any but such a man or an unbeliever marry such a woman: To believers such a thing is forbidden." (Qur'an 24:3)

Islam has taken very strict measures and precautions about the application of *Hadd* (Restrictive Ordinance of Allah) i.e., of flogging and stoning of unchaste men and women.

"Punishment of *Zinaa*"

If anyone is accused of *Zinaa*, it ought to be provided by one of the four ways:

1. He or she might have escaped the punishment by a stroke of luck, insufficient proof or by benefit of doubt.

1. Four eye witnesses.
2. Confessions ; the parties concerned to confess.
3. Circumstantial evidence *e.g.*, an unmarried woman becomes pregnant.
4. *Li'ānn* (each of the spouses curses himself/herself in case his/her allegation of adultery is wrong and curses the other if the allegation against him/her is false).

There should be four eye witnesses who have seen the man and the woman committing Zinaa (adultery or fornication). They must have caught or seen them red handed with the actual act.

All the witnesses must be of full age, Muslims, sane, just and upright, able to speak (not dumb or deaf), have good memory (can remember well what happened), have really seen the act (not just heard from others); the witnesses should not be near relatives of the accused, there must be no hatred between the witness and the accused; all the witness must be men; all the witnesses must give their evidence in one sitting. They must be impartial.

Failing this, the witnesses are to be flogged eighty stripes each. On and above that the slanderer or slanderers are to be deprived of one of their natural rights: *Witness*. They are not to give any further witness on any matter throughout their life, unless and until they reform and repent. Only then are they welcome back and given back

their right of giving evidence, and allowed to act as witnesses.

This calumny has been treated by Islam in such a way that no one ever thinks of putting forward any slanders or scandalous suggestions about any chaste woman.

Islam has been so strict with the slanderers so as the punishment for adultery and fornication may have its required effect.

Leaving everyone launching charges against everyone else without concrete evidence is the source of all anarchy. Anyone might put forward any scandalous accusation against an innocent person. The result of such acts is doubt. Every husband or wife becomes doubtful about the chastity of the spouse. He or she might even live in cloud of doubt about his or her own affinity.

In such a society where every male and female accuses everyone else of Zinaa, it is very much likely that those in whose heart is a disease or those who were hesitant committing such scandalous thing may do so, taking the advantage of the cloud of such allegations. It is a *fait accompli* to fish from troubled waters.

To protect the chastity of woman, the slanderer is given three types of punishment :

- (a) Corporal punishment : eighty stripes,
 - (b) Moral punishment : deprived of witness,
 - (c) Religious punishment : regarded as impious.
- Qur'an elucidates this in the following way :

“And those who launch a charge against

chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegations) flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their evidence ever after, for such men are wicked transgressors."

"Unless they repent thereafter and mend (their conduct) for Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Qur'an 24 : 4 & 5)

In ordinary cases two witnesses suffice but for such allegations, there should not be less than four witnesses who have all really seen the man and the woman actually committing the act of Zinaa, and the four witnesses must have the qualifications mentioned before. If not, then the accused are given the benefit of doubt, so that they may reform and repent without being punished by others.

(2) Avowal of sins

Sometimes the accused may confess that they committed adultery or fornication; then there is compassion. Each of them ought to be punished in accordance with his/her marital status. Flogging a hundred lashes to those who have never tasted married life, and stoning to death in a pit to those who have tasted married life.

It is related that Maa'iz ibn Malik al-Aslami came to the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) while he was in the mosque and confessed of his sin saying :

"O Messenger of Allah, I have committed adultery, and I require of you to cleanse me of this abomination." The Holy Prophet turned

his face from him and sent him away. Next morning the man came and repeated his confession explicitly as before. The Prophet sent him away again, and sent someone else to go and ask Maa'iz's kinsfolk whether there was something wrong with his mind. They all asserted that he was sane. Maa'iz came again to the Prophet for the third time, and again the Messenger of Allah sent someone else to have more enquiries about Maa'iz sanity. They all affirmed that the man was perfectly sane.

When Maa'iz came for the fourth time the Prophet asked him: "Are they immunised (by marriage against lust)?" Maa'iz said, "Yes". Then the Prophet asked him, "Perhaps you have just ogled? Or you kissed the woman's mouth or touched her body?" Maa'iz answered, "O Apostle of Allah, it was none of these things." The Prophet then asked him: "Did you have sexual intercourse with the woman?" Maa'iz said, "Yes, I have done so." The Prophet said: "Did you do by her what happens when the Kohl stick goes into the Kohl jar?" Maa'iz affirmed. Then the Prophet ordered that a pit be dug. Maa'iz was to enter into the pit and be stoned till death.

Another good example that we can cite now is that of the Ghamidia—a woman from the Ghamidi. She came to the Holy Prophet and said, "I have committed adultery. Cleanse me, then of this sin." The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) sent her away. On the next morning she was there

again before him, telling him, "May be that you have wanted to turn me away as you have done with Maa'iz. But by my faith and honour, I am pregnant."

The Prophet then ordered her to go and wait until delivery. After the birth of the child she came back with her child wrapped in a rag. When he saw that, the Prophet told her to go back till the child was breast-fed and weaned it. When that happened she came back with her child toddling beside her saying: "This is my child, O Prophet of Allah."

The Prophet then ordered that the child be given under care of a fellow Muslim, and the Ghamidi woman be stoned to death.

A drop of blood flew from her smashed head and fell on Khaalid b. al-Walid's face and he cursed her so loudly that the Apostle of Allah heard him. Here the Envoy of Allah (peace be upon him) told Khalid within hearing distance of others: "Softly O Khaalid, this woman has repented with a repentance so true and deep that if it were offered by an extortionist, he would have been absorbed."

In another version of the Hadith (Prophet's saying) it is related that the Prophet had said, ".....Her repentance is so ample that if it were to be divided between seventy of the people of Medina it would be sufficient unto all of them."

The Prophet gave both Maa'iz and the Ghamidi woman a golden opportunity to go back and

think better of their situations and escape humiliation and death by repenting secretly and their repentance would be true. But, alas! the divine influence has made them not to accept it, but to be cleansed in much an ample and true repentance.

We learn from the above Hadith (sayings of the Prophet) that the avowal of the sin should be four times, the same number as that of the witnesses and of the *Li'aan*. Both the parties concerned must be present.

If one of them admits and the other denies, the judge is to remind him/her of the act of punishment of the hereafter which is much more painful. The judgement will be: punishment for the one who admitted and the other is given the benefit of doubt and acquitted.

The following question might be raised: "Why is a married person who commits Zinaa is stoned to death while the unmarried is flogged a hundred stripes? Both of them committed the same thing."

Generally the person who has never tasted a married life is a naive, and more often than not he/she does not enjoy the act in the real sense and knows what he/she is doing. While the one who has tasted married life is more sexually mature and secure. When such a person does that act, he/she really enjoys it.

A man can marry upto four wives, provided he deals with them equally in all worldly matters. He can divorce his wife if the marriage proves a failure.

The wife can also divorce the husband if the nuptial contract permits that. She may go to the court to ask for a divorce. Islam is not like other religions and cultures which did not allow the divorce till very recently ; and in some of the cultures, there should first be such allegations that make it a slur on the family life of the spouses, before any divorce is granted.

So why on earth do such married people commit *Zinaa* ? It is a disease and a very bad and infectious one. There ought to be an amputation of such a disease before the public so as to be a lesson to all.

(3) Circumstantial Evidence

If an unmarried woman is found pregnant, then people are to investigate into the matter whether she committed *Zinaa* willingly or by force.

If a woman is married to a boy who has not come to age (not sexually mature) or married to a man whose male organ is excised, and she is found pregnant, then they are also to find out the causes of her pregnancy.

The same thing applies to a woman who was married and gave birth to a child within less than six months from the day her husband slept with her first.

After thorough investigation if it is found that the pregnant woman, from any of the above quoted cases or any similar cases, was forced or intimidated by someone, or someone slept

with her mistakenly thinking that she was his wife, as she might have slept in his bed ; or she was found still virgin because the male organ did not go into the female organ (the act could have taken place at the gate only and the semen only went into the body) or for some similar reasons. Here the woman is given the benefit of doubt if she did not confess that she did commit the act of *Zinaa*.

During the orthodox Caliphate the patrol saw a girl throwing something at the garbage. They found it to be a newly born girl. They followed her and saw her entering into the house of one of the greatest companions of the Prophet.

Next morning the companion was called before the Caliph and was told the story. He neither denied it nor affirmed it. He told them that he had only one daughter. They had better call her and ask her themselves.

When the girl was brought before the Caliph she admitted that it was her baby and she got it through *Zinaa*.

An unmarried young girl commits *Zinaa* and gives birth to a baby, how is it ?

She asked to be patient until she finished what she was going to tell them. She went reminding them that a year before they must have found a dead body at the same garbage heap and they did not know the killer. It was she then who had killed the man.

This is a third act then. She killed a man and then confessed.

But, wait ! She told them that, man was the illegal father of the baby.

They had a neighbour who told her parents that she was going on a journey and she wanted her daughter to stay with them till her return. The two girls slept together.

One day, in the middle of the night the daughter of the neighbour happened to be a boy and not a girl. He threatened her and forced her to have sex at the point of a knife and raped her. She struggled very much and in the long run managed to get hold of the knife after he had completed the raping. She killed him with his own knife, dragged him and threw him at the garbage heap before her house.

She was acquitted because she was forced to do the act.

If the judge has a complete proof or the woman admits, then there is no compassion. Drastic steps must be taken.

(4) Li'aan (Cursing each other)

Suppose one of the married couple accuses the other of unchastity ; what steps are to be taken ?

It is against human nature for one of the spouses who catches the other committing adultery to be able to live happily together afterwards. The accuser will be haunted by doubts day in and day out.

English courts never allow a married couple to give evidence against each other.

It is unfair to ask him to produce one eye witness, let alone four because the accusation partly affects him as well. No sane man will ever dare charge his wife with such a degrading accusation if she had never done it ; just because the accusation partly affects his reputation as well.

It is narrated that a companion, Hilaal bin Umayya, by name ; came back home at night and found his wife committing adultery with someone. He saw them both doing the act and heard them all what they were talking about.

He went straight to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and told him what he had seen and heard.

By that time Aya (verse) of the slanderers had already been revealed. The Prophet told Hilaal to bring evidence or he would be flogged eighty lashes as there was no other alternative.

Hilaal said that he had no evidence as he was alone. But Allah would have surely found him a way out.

The Apostle of Allah was about to order Hilaal to be stripped when a revelation came. He recited it to those present with Hilaal and sent for the wife.

When the wife came she was told of the accusation and the revelation was read over to her which was :

“And for those who launch charges against their spouses, and have (in support) no evidence

but their own. This solitary evidence (can be received) if they bear witness four times (with an oath) by Allah that they are solemnly telling the truth."

"And the faith (oath should be) that they solemnly invoke the curse of Allah on themselves if they tell a lie."

"But it would avert the punishment from the wife, if she bears witness four times (with an oath) by Allah that (her husband) is telling a lie."

"And the fifth (oath should be) that she solemnly invokes the wrath of Allah on herself if (her accuser) is telling a truth."

(Qur'an 24 : 6-9)

They were then told : that if the husband is a slanderer he is to confess and face the punishment : flogging eighty stripes ; or if the wife had really committed adultery she is to admit and face the stoning to death.

Both Hilaal and his wife were sworn. He swore four times saying that he was telling the truth. Then he was told to curse himself. He swore cursing himself if he was telling a lie.

Then it was the turn of the wife. She took the oath four times that he was telling a lie. When she was told to invoke the wrath of Allah on herself if her husband was telling the truth ; she became a bit hesitant at first. Then she made up her

mind saying that she would not be the cause of the shame of her parent. She swore the fifth oath cursing herself if her husband was telling the truth.

Here the Prophet punished neither of the two. He separated them for ever never to remarry.

We hear that in some societies they regard the scandalous accusations in courts between spouses as the easiest means of getting divorces. The worse of it, as it came to our ear, that most of these allegations are fabricated ones.

The case remains in courts for a period of upto two years before the judge rules out for the divorce, and the old couple remain separated during this period, each of them is free as a bird on a tree, doing whatever he or she wants waiting for the judgement. There is a security from the Welfare Department controlling with a hawk's eye for either to commit anything sexually during time of separation.

There are some of the things that are even worse than this in some other cultures.

In the Farewell Pilgrimage address the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, among what is said :

"O people ! you have certain rights over your wives, and so your wives over you. They are the trust of God in your hands. So you must treat them with all kindness. You have taken them only as a trust from Allah, and you have the enjoyment of their person by the words of Allah.

Allaal al-Faasy in his book : *Naqd adh-Dhāti* (Self Criticism) has written a full chapter on prostitution :

“There is no worse danger to the family than the public and private types of prostitution. Prostitution is one of the oldest evils from times immemorial. It is one of the social caterpillars that absorb the backbone of the house and destroys its being.”

“Prostitution came in vogue because of (many) reasons ; (some of) the reasons are lack of family sex satisfaction ; lack of mutual love and some misunderstanding between the couple and their integrity.”

“It is a pity that different social classes regard this problem as a trivial one, because they generally ignore it, thinking that it is one of the natural phenomena and it is very difficult to get rid of. It is therefore taken for granted.”

“The only step taken by reformists was still to organise the brothel taking periodical check and case of the places and the women so as to reduce the widespread of venereal diseases ; thinking that it was a more physical illness. They took this step to help travellers getting a quick sex satisfaction from those who are professionals rather than searching for it in decent societies.”

“The originator of this evil was Napoleon, the enemy of women, prostitution was one of

the evils of the eighteenth century, regardless of the protest by Mouliere, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot and others.....”

Here Allāl al-Faasy means that prostitution in its present form was originated by Napoleon, as he said before that this evil is an old one.

Allāl al-Faasy goes on discussing the problem in detail. He then gives us the following remedy :

“We shan’t get rid of prostitution unless and until we rid ourselves of its main causes which are :

(a) Social Cause

Morals and belief play a major part in combating human behaviour and controlling it. We are, then, to educate our young to be virtuous, chaste and become the masters of their instincts. The nostalgia of this is that there is sublimation in fine and applied arts and in social work. This could be done through youth organisations such as Scouting, Sports etc. etc.”

(b) Economic (Financial) Cause

“Some of the women, who take prostitution as a profession, do so, more often than not, because of hardship of life.....”

“A woman might not be able to look after herself and feed the couple of mouths that she is responsible to feed. Circumstances force her to be a prostitute ; because there is no such social security for her and the ones she is in charge of.....”

(c) Legal (Legislative) Cause

"If there is no authority to check people of what they do, it makes them do whatever they want. It is very difficult for anyone to control himself from each and everything if there is nothing to check his steps. Hence we had regulations and legislations. Laws are the best means of making people abide to morals and chastity."

"Societies should make rules and regulations to stop all types of prostitutions."¹

1. Allaal al-Faasy : *an Naqd adh-Dhaati* (with adaptations).

We are at the Verge of a Dilemma

If we take a thorough look through the window pane of our day to day events, we are sure to get shocked that we are heading swiftly to an inevitable world catastrophe.

The disaster is getting momentum waiting for its appropriate time.

Have we ever thought the cause of the downfall of the Pharaonic ; Greek, Chinese, Assyrian, Roman, Babylonian, Byzantine and Islamic (especially in Andalus) civilizations.

One of the reasons¹ was that woman was hardly mixing with man. Just turn your head a bit and see how the Spartan and Athenian soldiers take to drinks and women and now they can no more defend their country.

1. Other reasons are : drinks, decayance, personal grudges, political and economic reasons and abortion.

Woman was commingling with man in such a way that she aroused his sex instinct or drive or urge or desire or whatever word that pleases us to call. He could resist the temptation no more. He wanted to satisfy his sex urge.

There was a fierce battle between his morals and his animal behaviour. In the long run the sex satisfaction prevailed. His morale declined, and with it shame, honesty, self sacrifice, responsibility etc. etc. were Kaputt (dead).

As a result of all this he became an easy prey of his sex satisfaction. He wanted to satisfy his sex, whatever the cost may be.

They say, history repeats itself. We are starting to go on the same line.

The best example that comes to my mind is the Hippies,¹ Beatles and Banocks.

These are the outcome of some sort of frustration caused by the mother who never takes care of her child.

The Neo Jahilia woman is a self centred woman. She stays late awake at night. Wakes up in the morning running to the office or workshop.

When she comes back home, she soon leaves it for a model, hair dresser, out fitter or for a make up.

1. Hippies are the seekers of spiritual food which most of our societies lack, once lead they will prove to be very good and active members of our societies.

She comes back in the evening very tired. She sits in the parlour watching TV or listening to very loud music.

All this time the child is left at the mercy of the nanny or grandy.

All that the mother does is putting it on her laps for a minute or so. The child is lucky enough if it is ever kissed by its mother.

The Neo Jahilia children never hear fairy stories, obtain no help in doing their homework. Tender love of the mother is something quite unknown to them.

She forgets that it is the maternal love that makes all the changes.

Let us quote one or two prominent writers on woman.

Here is Agnes Meyer saying : ".....women had many careers, they had only one vocation—motherhood....."

She goes on to say : ".....What modern woman has to recapture, is the wisdom that just being a woman is her central task, and her greatest honour.....Women must boldly announce that no job is more exacting, more necessary, or more rewarding than that of a housewife and mother....."

Lundberg and Farnham argue and insist on the return to the eternal feminine.

William P. Chafe in his book : *The American Woman* says that the number of woman workers in America has doubled in 1948/49 as compared to that

of 1940. He pointed out some reasons of the unexpected increase.

I try here to add one or two more reasons not mentioned by Professor Chafe.

Some of the reasons of the increased number of women workers are the worldwide propaganda telling the woman to leave her house and earn a living, because when the husband feels that she can depend on her earnings, he will respect her.

The second reason was the death of hundreds of thousands of married soldiers during the World War II. They left behind widows and daughters. We shall appreciate this more if we remember that the number of the people died during the World War II is estimated at 60,000,000. If we say 50% of them were married. This gives us the total number of 30,000,000 widows with no support, let alone the number of children left at the mercy of nature after the death of those parents.

If we take a bird's eye view into the American society, we find the American family as a disintegrated one. The young wife who did not get sufficient maternal care and love during her early childhood, now hits back against the society. She has dates with a lot of people. When she gives birth to a baby girl she becomes so much afraid of the gloomy future of the girl that she tries her level best thinking of the means and ways of protecting the girl. This is done by her inner conscience. Some of them are led to hit back against

the society by selling their own young daughters to those who would like to make love with such young girls.

Coming back to the aftermath of the World War II we find that many soldiers who fought under the Nazi banner died. The widows had to leave their country of origin and go somewhere else to find a living. Some of them left for America and lived there. There are some other reasons that helped increase the number of women workers in America but time does not permit.

The main trouble is that many of our so called intelligentsia in the Muslim East have had their higher education in the West, and especially in America. When they come back they bring with them a hotch potch of everything.

They become the prophets of propagating all the ills of the West, because it is very easy to learn bad things rather than good ones. Why on earth do they not teach us the good things they found in the West?

Brothers and Sisters in Islam, let us go back to those World Treasures.

It is worthwhile to end this journey of ours with an extract from Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Farewell Sermon and two verses from the Holy Qur'an teaching us not to argue on matters we are ignorant about.

".....O Men! You have rights over your wives and they have rights over you. You have the right that they should not defile your bed, that they should not let any undesirable

person enter your house, except with your permission, and they should not behave with open unseemliness. If they do, God allows you to put them in separate rooms and to beat them, but not with severity. If they refrain from these things and obey you, they have right to their food and clothing with kindness. Lay injunctions on women kindly, for they are your wards having no control of their persons. You have taken them only as a trust from God, and you have the enjoyment of their persons by the word of God, so be fearful of Allah in regard to women and enjoin that they be treated well....."

Being true Muslims there are things which we can discuss and argue about, and there are others that we are just to obey without any argument. It is just because the knowledge we pretend to possess compared to that of Allah is but *very little*.

The Holy Qur'an says :

"The saying of (all true) believers when they appeal unto Allah and His Messenger to judge between them is only that they say : *"We hear and we obey. And such are the successful."* (Qur'an 24 : 51)

"And it becometh not a believing man and a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided an affair for them, *that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair.....*" (Qur'an 28 : 24)

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1. Al-Bahiy al-Khuuly : *al-Mar-ah baynal Baiti wal Mujtam'i*.
2. Allāl al-Faasi : *an Naqd adh-Dhaati*.
3. Poles Hanna Mas-'ad : *Mamajiyyatut Taaliimi Sayhuniya*.
4. Ar-Rabi' ibnul Habib : *Musnad ar-Rabi'i*.
5. Ali Yahya Mu'ammār : *Al-Abaadhiyat fi Mawkibit 'Taarih*.
6. Abul A'ala al-Maududi : *Harakai Tahdeedi Nasli*.
7. Sheikh Mansour Ali Naasif : *At Taaaj al-Jaamiu lil Usuli fi Ahadithir Rasuli*.
8. Dr. Yousuf as Sibaa'i, *al-Mar-a baina Fiqh wa Qunūn*.
9. Muhammad al-Ghazali : *Fiqh as Sira*.
10. Sayyid Qutub : *Fi Dhilalil Qur'an*.
11. Abbas Mahmūd al-Aqqaad : *al-Mar-a fil Qur'an*.

In English

12. Abdulla Yousuf Ali : *The Glorious Qur'an*.

13. Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall : *Holy Qur'an*.
14. The Bible Societies : *Good News—Bible*.
15. *Everyman's Encyclopedia*.
16. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
17. Riad Droubie : *Status of Women in Islam*.
18. Abd 'Allah al-Khayyaat : *The Muslim Guide to Faith and Purification*.

In Swahili

19. Said Abdulla Seif Al Hatimy : *Waliosilimu Mwanzo*.

Other useful Books but not used

1. Yousef Al-Quradhawi : *AlHalaal wal Haram fil Islam*.
2. Abdul-Muta'ali Al-Jabri : *Al-Mar-atu fit Tasawwuri Islami*.
3. Abul Naser Ruzq : *Taadduduz Zaujāti fil Islam*.
4. Mohammad Ali Sabuni : *Shubhāt wa Abatīl Hawla Taaddudi Zawjati Rasūli*.
5. McMormack Arther : *People and Food*.
6. FAO Reports.
7. Thompson Warren : *Population Problem*.
8. Fredric Bugheo : *Marriage and Family*.

9. Saalih Abdul' Aziz : *Tatawwarun Nadhariat Tarbawiya*.
10. Mohammad Tal'at Harb : *Tarbiyatul Mar-a wal Hijaab*.
11. Sir Ameer Ali : *The Spirit of Islam*.
12. Muhammed al-Mahjdoub : *Taammulaatun fil Mar'a wal Mujtama*.

Some of Our Publications

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1. The meaning of the Qur'an. Volume I to VIII.
2. The Prophet of Islam. 3. Finality of Prophethood.
4. Fundamentals of Islam. 5. Islamic Way of Life.
6. Ethical Viewpoint of Islam.
7. A Short History of the Revivalist Movement in Islam.
8. The Religion of Truth.
9. The Road to Peace and Salvation.
10. The Sick Nations of the Modern Age.
11. Islamic Law and Constitution.
12. First Principles of Islamic State.
13. Rights of Non-Muslims in Islamic State.
14. Islamic Law and its Introduction in Pakistan.
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16. The Process of Islamic Revolution.
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18. Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam.
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21. The Qadiani Problem. 22. Jihad in Islam.
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27. Vitals of Faith.

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28. Miskat-ul-Masabih, Volume I & II.
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30. The Life of Muhammad (PBUH).

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31. Everyday Fiqh. Volume I & II.
32. The Prescribed Prayers.
33. A Simple Life Story of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique.

BY NAEEM SIDDIQUI

34. Muhammad the Benefactor of Humanity.

BY SARWAT SAULAT

35. The Life of the Prophet (PBUH).

BY AFZAL-UR-RAHMAN

36. Economic Doctrines of Islam. Vol. I to III.
37. Utility of Prayer.

